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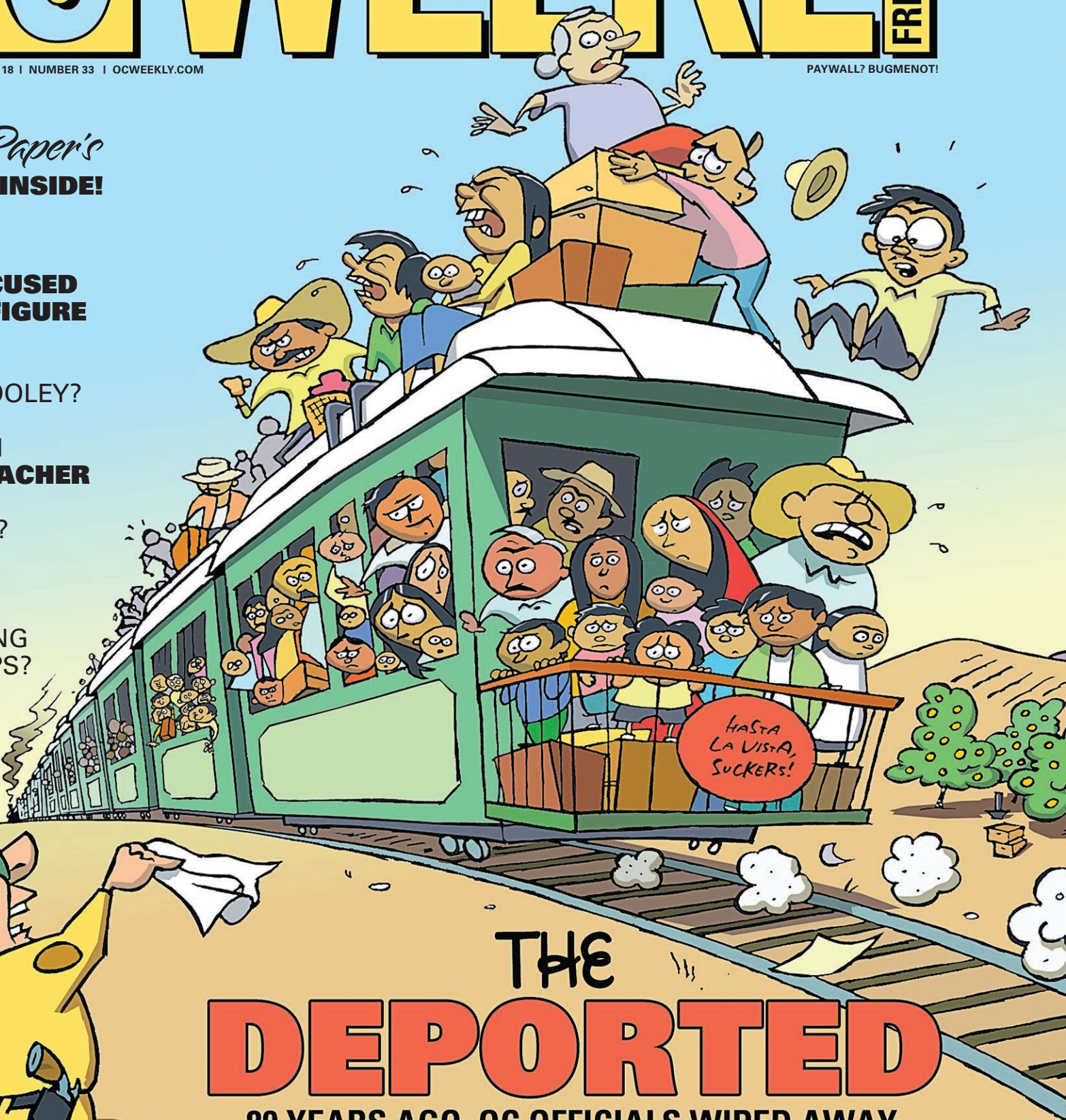
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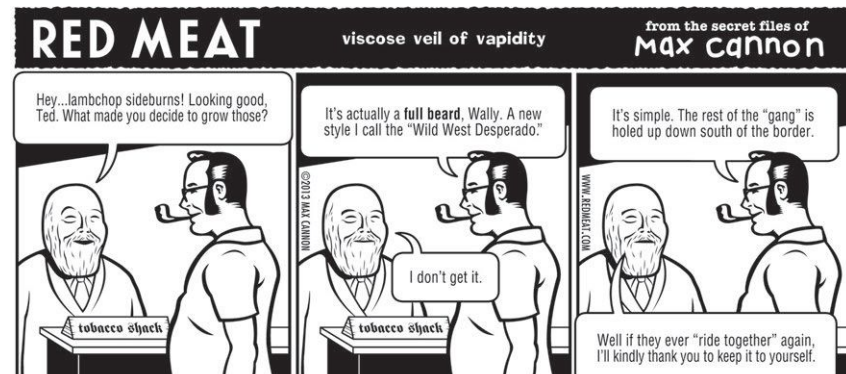
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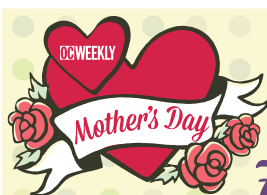
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A Question of Identity

Which accused LA crime figure is a friend of a friend of Ex-DA Steve Cooley?

Internal Revenue Service special agents tracking organized crime operations in Southern California might disagree, but Los Angeles' Sam Solakyan

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is the kind of millionaire friend anyone would want—at least based on his public persona. Solakyan enjoys a reputation for showering gifts, especially on law enforcement officials. The 31-year-old Armenian who immigrated to the United States at

the age of 6 and grew up in North Hollywood has given generous sums of money to the Burbank Police Department, city of Glendale, ex-Drug Enforcement Administration agents and California Highway Patrol-related officials.

So it is not necessarily surprising that Solakyan would try to come to the rescue of Suren Gambaryan, a longtime North Hollywood friend who found himself in serious trouble earlier this year. But Gambaryan (aka "Sonny") is no cop. According to the IRS Criminal Division, he's a dangerous member of Armenian Power, a Southern California crime family with outposts in Anaheim.

In February, IRS agents arrested Gambaryan after a federal grand jury issued a 132-count, identity-theft indictment against him and six other men: Ashot Karapetian of North Hollywood, Artak Berberyan of Van Nuys, Vigen Tsaturyan of Sun Valley, Akop Kantrdzyan of Sylmar, Armen Berberyan of Van Nuys, Armen Zargaryan of Granada Hills and David Samsonyan of Winnetka.

According to the 50-page indictment, the conspirators—all of whom have pleaded not guilty—stole identities in Los Angeles and Orange counties as part of a con game to rob the U.S. Treasury. Agents claim that during a two-year period beginning in 2010 the defendants filed 2,977 fraudulent Form 1040 tax returns (many using names of elderly citizens who no longer work) seeking \$19.3 million in imaginary refunds. If the allegations are true, the scam worked well. Court records show that the IRS paid 62 percent of the fake claims for a total loss to taxpayers of more than \$9,952,000.

While there's nothing special about identity theft-ring prosecutions nowadays, this case—though still in its infancy—has taken several fascinat-

ing turns. As a result, the region's law enforcement community is at bitter odds, a federal judge is seething and Solakyan has found his well-crafted saintly image at least temporarily soiled. According to a post-indictment affidavit filed by Assistant United States Attorney Todd T. Tristan, the cop-hugging businessman is "a target" in the ongoing, organized crime investigation.

Tristan's accusation against Solakyan is startling because the businessman has a stockpile of appreciative letters from police agencies. And last year, Solakyan hired former Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley, a man with tremendous criminal law knowledge but no known corporate law experience, to serve as chief legal counsel to Global Holdings, Inc., where Solakyan is the sole shareholder. According to the California Secretary of State's office, that company is one of at least 10 corporate entities controlled by Solakyan, including Paramount Management Services and Vital Imaging, which has won government contracts at the Los Angeles County Jail and the United States Navy Research Center.

In a 2012 Global Holdings brochure, Solakyan published a picture of himself shaking hands with Cooley and added a quote. "When he announced his retirement, I was persistent in convincing him to not fully retire just yet," he said. "I know that I can learn a lot from him so when he agreed to come aboard I was extremely happy."

Solakyan learned that he was a suspect after he tried to post more than \$1.96 million in bail for Gambaryan. The government claims to have multiple telephone recordings of Gambaryan ordering fake California driver's licenses in the scam to dupe the IRS. For example, in "call #49" the defendant allegedly discusses creating fake IDs with Santa Ana and Anaheim addresses. In another call, he outlines ways to avoid law enforcement detection, according to court records.

During the execution of a search warrant, agents claim they recovered fake driver's licenses that matched the names on the IRS refund checks. As agents approached one location for a raid, they saw a small computer thumb drive tossed from the residence. It purportedly contained a spreadsheet of 109 fake names and fake refund requests totaling more than \$81,000.

According to Tristan's court declarations, Solakyan is suspicious for multiple reasons, including taking "measures to conceal his true residence," his official



JIM RUGG

documents contain misspellings even of his own name (a move the prosecutor says indicates deception), he owes several hundred thousand dollars in income tax for his \$3.5 million Global Holdings' pay in 2011 and he falsely represented himself "to be in law enforcement" when questioned by an IRS agent. Adding to Tristan's mistrust is that the businessman purchased a badge and a gun-carrying permit in 2011 from a discredited (and now disbanded), two-person police agency 107 miles away in a one gas station town, Maricopa, CA. The federal prosecutor also alleges in his filings that Solakyan has been involved in the medical transport business, "a known source of the identities in this scheme," and that the businessman has "a close relationship" with Gambaryan.

Kenny Reed—Gambaryan's well-respected, Santa Ana-based defense lawyer—was shocked that Tristan seemed, in his view, to "dishonestly" smear Solakyan, "a pillar of the community," for trying to help his client obtain pretrial bail. Reed claims that Solakyan is so respected in law enforcement in recent years "he met with department heads of the CIA, FBI, DEA and he toured the White House as a guest given a private tour." Reed also suggests that Cooley's association with Solakyan is unquestionable proof of his character.

But Sam Dordulian, a former Los Angeles County deputy district attorney and Solakyan's personal lawyer, is most incredulous. "I am dismayed at the level of unprofessionalism, utter disregard for the truth, logic and even reasoning," Dordulian wrote in an April 1 affidavit. "It seems the quest to 'win' at all cost is on full display by [Tristan] . . . To label my

client a 'target' now simply because he had the audacity to offer his properties as a surety for an old family friend is an inappropriate use of authority."

U.S. Magistrate Judge Arthur Nakazato declared on March 27 that Tristan's filings to block Gambaryan's bail are so far mostly based on "unsubstantiated" assertions and are "a disgrace" because the prosecutor's briefs contain "numerous typographical, formatting, grammatical and spelling errors."

The 16-year judge, normally a favorite of prosecutors, hasn't hidden his contempt for Tristan's "disorganization." Yet Nakazato, whose parents suffered internment during World War II, is no sucker. He too has his suspicions about Solakyan, writing in an order of his "amazement" that someone so young could have obtained his "apparent wealth."

During a heated April 9 hearing inside Santa Ana's Ronald Reagan Federal Courthouse, Tristan renewed his contentions that Solakyan's wealth is derived from "illegitimate" funds. Reed exploded at the sloppiness of the government's case—even declaring he will "rip open the chest" of the IRS agent on the case, Michael J. Walfield, when he lands on the witness stand. Nevertheless, Nakazato refused to grant Gambaryan's \$3.55 million bail after noting the strength of Tristan's overall case. He ordered an April 22 hearing to resolve the issue of Solakyan's credibility, and he issued a warning to the prosecutor.

"You've painted Mr. Solakyan as part of the [criminal] operation as a straw man or a money launderer," the judge told Tristan. "If so, charge him accordingly. But if he turns out to be a solid citizen, then there will be hell to pay."

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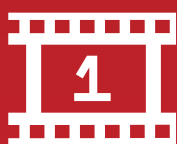
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ask a mexican! »

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO



DEAR MEXICAN:

We're in state testing this week at the high school I teach at. After the students finish a section, they can only sit and read or

just sit. I did an experiment: I chose the cholo-est, tattled, pierced, non-readers and dropped your book on their desk. Students that never read, read for 45 minutes straight. They were seeing words that they use every day in print for the first time. They had as much fun with the glossary as with the questions. They were sharing, laughing, discussing what they read. Then I set the hook: "We'll be using that book in my Chicano Studies class." Best recruiting tool ever. That's my personal copy, and it's getting beat up. I'll be ordering more for the classroom. Thanks again, you have made my job much easier.

Maestro Man

DEAR GABACHO: It's stories like yours that make writing this column worth all the hate mail. The *próxima* question, on the other hand ...

DEAR MEXICAN: I'm a 23-year-old Mexican girl on my second year at a Cal State university and also work part-time at a hospital. I'm dating a white boy who is 25, works a minimum-wage job and graduated with a GED. We have been dating for more than a year now, but when we were about six months into the relationship we decided to move out. Due to our financial difficulties, we had to move back in with our parents. Now, my traditional father is almost forcing us to get married, since we have lived together, or dump him and find

someone else who is doing better for himself. It's so bad that now my white boyfriend does not feel comfortable coming over. How do I confront my Mexican father about us not living in Mexico and times having changed, and what do I tell my white boyfriend?

A Confused and Sad Mexican Girl

DEAR WABETTE: While I'm all for new traditions and the exiling of *rancho* mores to the *rancho*, don't discount your father's partial common sense. *Primeramente*, you're WAY too young to be settling down with one guy right now—*Dios mío*, you haven't even finished college! And while I'm not going to hate on folks who earned only a GED, a *gabacho* who wasn't able to graduate high school when he was supposed to is like a Mexican man who was only able to eat 10 tacos at the last family *carne asada* Sunday—a disgrace to the *raza*, and not much of an *hombre*. Not only that, if your dad really was old *escuela*, he wouldn't have accepted the two of you moving out in the first place AND he'd have problems with you going to college, period! So pay attention to your *papi* saying to look for someone else, but do tell him that the days of a woman having to marry the first man to bed her went the way of the tequila bottles at my friend Gaby's wedding. Finally, reify your humble Mexican's advice, *chula*: there are many flavors of chorizo in the market, so why buy the first one you see instead of tasting all of them? And finish your education and find yourself a career before getting a *novio*—the future you're saving is your own.

ASK THE MEXICAN

at themexican@askamexican.net, be his fan on Facebook, follow him on Twitter or ask him a video question at youtube.com/askamexicano!

HeyYou! » ANONYMOUS

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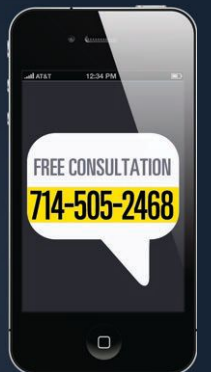
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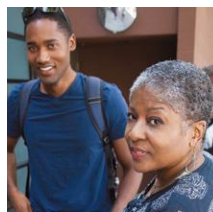
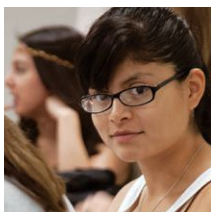
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THE LOST MEXICANS OF THE BASTANCHURY RANCH

80 YEARS AGO, OFFICIALS DEPORTED HUNDREDS OF FULLERTON RESIDENTS—
AND ORANGE COUNTY HAS TRIED TO FORGET EVER SINCE

BY GUSTAVO ARELLANO | PHOTOS BY JOHN GILHOOLEY

Decades later, long after federal authorities deported the last of her students, Arletta Kelly still remembered the cactus. In the 1920s and 1930s, Kelly had worked as an Americanization teacher in the citrus camps of Orange County, tasked with schooling Mexican immigrants in the art of good citizenship. During the day, she taught women how to sew and cook American meals like casseroles and pies; at night, the Michigan native recited basic English phrases before audiences of men so that they could use them at work. She bounced across the *colonias* (worker colonies) of North County, from La Habra to

MORALES' MOM, REFUGIO ARTEAGA, AT THE BASTANCHURY RANCH IN THE LATE 1920S

Placentia, Anaheim to Fullerton. But Kelly eventually spent most of her time with the Mexicans of the Bastanchury Ranch, 6,000 rolling acres of what now constitutes the exclusive neighborhoods of northwest Fullerton—Sunny Hills, Valencia Mesa and others—and parts of Brea and La Habra, an area that to this day, with its winding roads, visible horse stables, dramatic valleys and stretches of untouched California landscape, feels rustic, beautiful and foreboding.

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THE LOST MEXICANS OF THE BASTANCHURY RANCH

In 1968, Betty Schmidt with the Center for Oral and Public History (COPH) at Cal State Fullerton interviewed Kelly about her days at the Ranch—and that’s when Kelly brought up the cactus. By then 70 years old, the *maestra* fondly recalled the Bastanchury Mexicans, who had created a society of their own far removed from the rest of Orange County. They were so grateful for Kelly’s tutelage that women frequently invited her to their ramshackle homes for dinner and a bit of south-of-the-border hospitality. Kelly singled out the cooking of one woman because, as she told her interviewer, “One of the things that she served so frequently that I was fond of was what

she called ‘nopalitos,’ which are the little tiny shoots of the cactus.”

Schmidt asked from where did the unnamed Mexican woman buy the nopalitos. “There were big cactus” all around the Bastanchury territory, Kelly said. “And then when the spring came they would come up; why, when the shoots would come up, [the Mexican woman] would cut them off and peel them and slice them down and cut them up in little bits.”

The rest of Kelly’s interview, transcribed and available for reading at the COPH archives, is filled with similarly pastoral anecdotes, stories about riding a bicycle, about another Mexican woman

ABOVE: CUCA MORALES, ON ONE OF THE TRAILS ON THE FORMER BASTANCHURY RANCH. BELOW: THE HILL OF CACTUS OFF EUCLID AVENUE THAT THE BASTANCHURY MEXICANS WOULD HARVEST.

who pronounced “cheese” as “Jesus,” and about her role in helping orchard growers fight strikers during the 1936 Citrus War. But when Schmidt asked about the fate of her students at the Ranch, Kelly’s sharp memory quickly became spotty.

“Well, I think many of them went back to Mexico because work was scarcer and some of them had accumulated a little bit of money and so I knew of quite a few families that packed up and they drove back—in old jalopies—back to Mexico—the ones I happen to know of,” Kelly said.

“Now, others may have gone by some other method, I don’t know.”

In fact, the Mexicans who lived on the Bastanchury Ranch in the early 1930s were subject to one of the largest mass deportations in Orange County history, with hundreds of them in late March of 1933—single men and families, Mexican nationals and American citizens—thrown onto trains bound for Mexico, carrying with them only the clothes on their backs and whatever belongings they could lug along. Almost overnight, a vibrant community vanished, the homes of former residents demolished, its memory bulldozed into wealthy neighborhoods, the few surviving scraps locked in university archives or in the recollections of those few families that escaped exile.

Eighty years ago this spring, officials



deported hundreds of legal residents whose only crime was being Mexican during the Great Depression—and Orange County has tried to forget ever since.

The Bastanchury family is familiar to generations of Southern California residents and scholars alike, and not just because of their namesake road, which unspools through the hills of Fullerton, Brea, Placentia and Yorba Linda. The Basque clan were one of Orange County's first national celebrities, a dynasty whose patriarch, Domingo, arrived at what's now Fullerton in the 1860s and eventually acquired about 10,000 acres of desolate terrain: for decades, his house was just one of two between Anaheim and Los Angeles. Originally using his holdings as grazing lands for sheep, Domingo's four sons eventually turned the Ranch into an agriculture and livestock powerhouse: 1,500 acres devoted to black-eyed peas, 500 acres for lima beans; hundreds of acres of walnut orchards and fields that, by 1928, sold more than 50 percent of California's tomatoes; 10 acres of Berkshire hog pens; and canneries and two packing houses that boxed the Ranch's riches for sale to the rest of America. Oil money came in the form of a legal settlement, and some of the water drawn from artesian wells for irrigation was sold publicly as Bastanchury Water, a brand that existed for decades. The estate was so sprawling that the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroads built spurs near the packing houses, the easier to pick up the bounty, while the Pacific Electric Railway kept two stations within Ranch limits. Managers had to cut up the Ranch into sections with their own supervisors, just to handle everything properly.

But the crown jewel of the Bastanchurys was their 3,000-acre citrus grove, rows of Valencia orange and lemon trees that went up and down the Ranch, held in place by terrace farming. On the family's stationery and on the labels for their orange crates, marketed under the Model, Basque, Daily, Popular and Golden Ram brands, read the slogan "The World's Largest Orange and Lemon Orchard," a claim no one bothered to dispute.

Domingo's sons were fiercely proud of their accomplishments and never shied away from boasting about what they had willed up from what many considered remote badlands. "Some of my ideas were discountenanced by scientific men, by farm bureau men," Gaston Bastanchury told the *California Citrograph*, the bible of the Golden State's citrus industry, in 1923. He was the public face of the family, a man who frequently made the society pages for his many trips abroad, a tycoon so rich that he once offered heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey an \$800,000 purse if the Manassa Mauler would fight on the Ranch, in a custom-built arena Gaston promised would seat 135,000 people. "I felt that I knew what we could do and kept on. But the fact remains that these old brown hills—and you can still see hundreds of acres in that same state around us—have produced trees and those trees are beginning to return something on the investment of labor and money which have been put into them."

Life was fabulous on the Ranch—it became the center of Basque life in Southern California, featuring weekend-long parties filled with traditional lunches and dinners. There was even a handball court so that nostalgic men could play the jai alai of their youth. But to create their dreamland, the Bastanchurys needed cheap labor—first, Native Americans, then fellow Basques and a smattering of Japanese. By the 1920s, though, cheap labor in Southern California agriculture meant Mexican workers, and the Bastanchurys began recruiting across the Southwest and abroad, uniting with fellow Orange County orchard owners to lobby Congress for relaxed immigration laws, arguing only Mexicans could properly work with oranges.

"Our experience shows us that the white man does not like the tedious routine work of picking and will promptly leave this for any other job available, even at smaller wages," wrote J. A. Prizer, manager of the Placentia Orange Growers Association, in a prepared statement given to Congress in 1928. At that same hearing, Prizer revealed that county growers used the Bastanchurys' worker rolls to determine how many Mexicans they needed to run a successful operation. "The Mexican, by nature, seems to be peculiarly adapted to this class of work. He is patient, and apparently enjoys the work itself."

And so the Bastanchurys brought in hundreds of Mexicans. A contemporary of the dynasty derided the Ranch as "their own private kingdom in the Fullerton hills," isolated from the rest of civilization, and it wasn't far from the truth: while grower-sponsored worker camps sprang up across Orange County's citrus belt, the Bastanchurys' orange pickers lived like serfs.

"[The Bastanchurys] had the Old World feudalistic attitude toward their farm hand," wrote Druzilla Mackey, an Americanization teacher in Orange County alongside Arleta Kelly, in a 1949 history of education in Fullerton. She had no problem with the workers, describing them as "always the poorest of our Mexicans, the most friendly and also the most idealistic." But she openly despised the Bastanchurys, writing "they felt generous in allowing these squatters to establish homes on their ranch and could not comprehend its danger to the health and morality of the community as a whole."

Mackey described abodes constructed from sheet iron, discarded fence posts, sign boards, even rusted bed springs—whatever detritus Mexicans could find in the Ranch's trash dump; Kelly remembered one built of "cartons and wood and pieces of tin." Some houses were half-wood, half-canvas. Few had running water; nearly all had outside, shared toilets. Rains turned everything into a swamp; despite the abundance of artesian water, families had to draw their own from irrigation ditches and carry it via buckets to their homes. Once a week, a grocery wagon arrived with fresh produce and meat—a necessity, since almost no one had refrigeration because there was little electricity. Some homes had dirt floors, some were just tents. Elsie Carlson, who taught the Ranch's Mexican children, put it

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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THE LOST MEXICANS OF THE BASTANCHURY RANCH

thusly: "I felt like a missionary."

The conditions endured by the Bastanchury Mexicans became something of a county scandal; a newspaper exposé, lost to history but cited by Kelly in her CPH oral history, mentioned the "exceedingly primitive and poverty stricken" condition of the camp, which upset the Bastanchurys and their management. But after organizing by the Americanization teachers and the Rev. Graham C. Hunter of the First Presbyterian Church of Fullerton, the Ranch finally relented and built homes for workers with potable water in 1927, along with a wooden classroom for first-, second-, and third-graders—tellingly, the Basque and white children on the Ranch were bussed to the "white" schools in the Fullerton flatlands, while the Mexican children on the Ranch had to trudge at least a half mile to school on dirt roads through orchards.

A community grew. The 1920 census showed only a few Mexicans living on the Ranch; by the 1930 census, the official count was 411. It had grown so much that the U.S. Census Bureau gave the Bastanchurys their own designated tract, split

in bigger ones. A monthly dance was held at the schoolhouse, and the Americanization teachers frequently presented their Mexican pupils to the Fullerton population at large as proof of their good work, affairs that earned approving write-ups in the *Fullerton News Tribune* and the *Santa Ana Register*. No one was an illegal immigrant; all the Bastanchury Mexicans were either American citizens or sponsored by their hosts, with most originating from Tepic, Jalisco.

This bucolic life couldn't last. In October 1931, at the height of the Great Depression, the Bastanchurys shocked Orange County by announcing they had debts of \$2 million and were placing their beloved Ranch into a receivership. The celebrated citrus grove wasn't producing; it turned out that the soil on the Ranch wasn't conducive to large-scale, long-term growing, just as the old-timers had tried to tell the Bastanchurys.

But something more nefarious had infested the Ranch as well. In just three years, Orange County politicians had gone from begging Congress for more Mexican labor to demanding that those



A GROUP OF WOMEN WHO TOOK THE RANCH'S AMERICANIZATION CLASSES. MORALES IS THE CUTE TODDLER AT BOTTOM LEFT.

into six *colonias*: Tia Juana, Mexicali, Escondido, Coyote, Santa Fe and San Quintín, which some ominously called El Hoyo—The Hole. Tia Juana was the largest, then Mexicali, and they were around what's now Laguna Lake Park in Fullerton; the rest gravitated near what's now St. Jude Hospital. Stand-alone shacks remained dotted throughout the Ranch.

"I think they were very happy people, really, they lived a very simple life, but it was probably somewhat better than the life they lived in Mexico," Kelly said, and the Mexicans made do with what they had. Though the houses were downtrodden, they were well kept, with gardens of flowers and vegetables prettying the environment. Mothers sent their children off to school scrubbed clean and dressed in their Sunday best. During the major Mexican holidays—Mexican Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo and Día de los Muertos—the *colonias* held their own private celebrations or traveled together to Placentia and Los Angeles to partake

workers give up their jobs, homes and lives to whites and return to Mexico. By 1931, federal agents were raiding barrios and *colonias* across Southern California, rounding up legal residents and American citizens of Mexican descent alike, and deporting them to Mexico; upon arriving, the Mexicans were forced to give up their legal papers allowing entry back into the States. Taking a kinder approach, church, civic and business groups asked Mexicans to leave, vowing to pay their train fare. Even the Mexican Consulate, not wishing to anger their American neighbors, organized return trips back, with promises of jobs that somehow never materialized.

Without the family's patronage, the Bastanchury Mexicans were threatened. In the fall of 1932, the Mexican Consulate helped to organize a meeting in Fuller-

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ton to figure out how immigrants could stave off repatriation. The government's deportation campaigns had begun in Orange County, organized by the local Department of Welfare. The consulate's Orange County representative, Santa Ana resident Lucas Lucio, accompanied deported Mexicans from the Santa Ana train station to Union Station in Los Angeles, where he would then join them on a Southern Pacific train to El Paso to ensure they weren't further abused. Even 45 years later, in an interview with a professor, the experience made Lucio shudder.

"At the station in Santa Ana, hundreds of Mexicans came and there was quite a lot of crying," he said. "The men were pensive and the majority of the children and mothers were crying." Lucio told the story of how on one trip, when the train didn't stop in El Paso but rather proceeded into Juarez, there was "a terrible cry... many did not want to cross the border ... a disaster, because the majority of the families were separated. There was no way for anyone to try to leave the train or run or complete their desire to return to the United States."

In February of 1933, the Bastanchury's empire was auctioned from the steps of the Orange County Courthouse and put under new management; within five days, a hundred unemployed white men swarmed the Ranch, confident white ownership would give them a job. The era of the Bastanchury Mexicans was about to end.

Sometime that spring, new management and a consortium of white business, political and civic leaders went to the Ranch's schoolhouse and told the Mexicans they had to leave. "The Americanization centers in which these people had been taught how to buy homes and make themselves a part of the American community," Mackey wrote 18 years later, "were now used for calling together assemblages in which county welfare workers explained to bewildered audiences that their small jobs would now be taken over by the white men, that they were no longer needed nor wanted in these United States." As a last-ditch effort, she paraded her Americanization students in front of a men's civic group as she always had, desperately trying to show that the Bastanchury Mexicans were worthy of staying. But it didn't work.

"And so," she concluded, "one morning we saw nine train-loads of our dear friends roll away back to the windowless, dirt-floored homes we had taught them to despise."

On Friday, March 31, a week after Mackey's efforts, 437 Mexicans—"mostly children," according to the *News Tribune*, and almost all from the Ranch—were herded onto nine passenger trains, one bound for Nogales, another to Juarez. The local media tried to paint the Mexicans as welfare cases—"Repatriation of Mexicans Eases Burden," read a headline in the *Santa Ana Register*—and pointed out that the Mexican government promised jobs to their repatriated countrymen upon their return. In reality, the Mexicans were left penniless in a country that

parents hadn't visited in years and their American-born children simply didn't know. Few, if any, ever returned to Orange County.

It was the largest mass deportation in county history, and stung those few people who witnessed the episode for the rest of their lives. Lucio recalled they "were very poor...went on the half fare of the Southern Pacific." Juanita Ferraris, granddaughter of Domingo Bastanchury, told the *News Tribune* in 1955 that it was "one of the saddest sights I've ever seen."

And they departed with work available on the Ranch: in April, the new owners announced in the *News Tribune* that they were looking for "local men" to hire; in May, they revealed they already shipped 55,000 boxes of lemons in just two months—since the Mexicans left.

The Ranch's six *colonias* were eradicated; by June of that year, the schoolhouse was moved to another school and turned into a soup kitchen. Houses were either sold off to other citrus camps or simply demolished and tossed back into the scrap heap from where they came. Years later, a Fullerton council member told the COHP that the 1930 census showed that the city had 10,882 residents; in 1940, that figure shrank to 10,300. Bewildered, he admitted, "We finally found out that the reason for the population loss was because we lost the workers up" at the Ranch. Figures from the 1940 census reviewed by the *Weekly* showed that not a single Mexican listed as living on the Bastanchury's estate in 1930 remained.

Some of the Bastanchury Mexicans, however, did evade the deportation train. One of those was the family of Fullerton resident Cuca Morales. Born in 1927, her birth certificate lists her place of birth as the "Tia Juanita Camp" at the Ranch. Her memories are clouded not by age—her mind is as sharp as someone half her age—but rather by the fact that she was only five when her parents were forced to move away.

At her home, in a housing tract set aside for veterans when she and her husband bought it in the 1950s, Morales keeps many photos from those days. One shows her as a baby, held by her mother, as Cuca's father, who worked as a lemon picker, plays the violin and an unnamed man accompanies him on guitar. In another, she's a toddler standing by her mother's side in a group shot of women who took Mackey's Americanization classes. Behind them, rows of citrus groves stretch over the horizon.

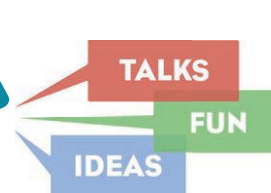
"My grandpa used to be the man who would hold the dances" at the schoolhouse, she says. "I'd stand by him while my mom accepted the money." And she also remembered Maria Bastanchury, the dowager of the Ranch. "She was a stingy lady," the octogenarian says with a laugh. "After workers harvested the walnuts every season, she'd be raking through the leaves, looking for more."

Morales says she only knew of one family repatriated to Mexico, that of her brother's godparents—"and he cried for months after they left," she remembered. Everyone else she knew moved on to other *colonias*, or the barrios of Santa Ana, La Habra and Anaheim. "My dad wanted to go

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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THE LOST MEXICANS OF THE BASTANCHURY RANCH



back to Mexico, but Mom [who was born in Arizona to Mexican immigrants] said, 'No, we're going to stay here—if you want to go, you can.'

To remain, Morales' parents went to Gaston Bastanchury, who fixed her father's papers—but they still had to leave the Ranch. The family sold their house for a Buick, and they ended up living in La Habra's Alta Vista camp, where Morales grew up before moving to Fullerton, where she raised a family and has lived ever since.

Her parents "never talked about" the disappearance of the Bastanchury Mexican *colonias*. "I remember one time my mom said that they were poorer on the Ranch. And when I bought my house in Fullerton, she said, 'I don't like Fullerton,' but never said why." Morales kept in contact with former residents of Tia Juana but has never dwelled on its importance. But her daughter Clara—a retired employee of the United Auto Workers—does. "You still have families who came from the Bastanchury Ranch around town," she says. "One time, I was at the bank, and somehow, someone asked [one of the customers] where was she born. 'The Bastanchury Ranch,' she said. It sounded like she was proud that she was from there."

"Most of the people who were born there are dead," Cuca suddenly said.

"But it's part of history," Clara shoots back. "And it should be noted. Instead, people want to forget us."

To remember, Clara drives her mother through the streets of what was the Bastanchury Ranch—"what's now a bunch of rich people's homes," she cracks. "Mom always appreciates going down Gilbert [Street] and Euclid [Avenue]. To see the cactus."

It's spring again, and the hills of Fullerton are blooming. Native shrubs like coyote brush, Southern willow scrub and California sagebrush feature new branches; flowering plants like yellow sun cups, purple phacelia and orange monkeyflowers bloom. Hikers and bikers zip along trails and streets, most ending up at Laguna Lake Park off Euclid.

Across the street is the Robert E. Ward Nature Preserve, a fenced-off section of the West Coyote Hills that developers have long eyed to turn into more ranch-

MORALES' FAMILY AT THE RANCH. HER FATHER, CRUZ VARGAS, IS ON VIOLIN.

style homes. This is the heart of what was the Bastanchury Ranch—and from the parking lot of Sunny Hills Church of Christ you can see the earth alive with the new shoots of prickly pear cactus.

It was near here where the Ranch schoolhouse existed, here where its workers came to trim the *nopalitos* that grew anew every spring, where a community lived and loved and learned. And it's these cacti that nearly everyone interviewed about the Ranch—from Arletta Kelly to Druzilla Mackey, Elsie Carlson to Cuca Morales, and so many more—brought up as the sole surviving remnant of the Bastanchury Mexicans, the sight always prompting them to recall the forgotten past.

Those memories never made any Orange County narratives. Although mentions of the Ranch *colonias* dot the COHP archives, only a few people ever access them. Those who lived through its demise mostly kept their memories to themselves, saving photos in albums not available to the public. No full examination of the Bastanchury Mexicans exists: the only two academic texts to even mention them are Gilbert G. González's seminal 1994 study of Orange County's Mexican orange pickers, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, and Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez's *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s*—and the former only devotes a few paragraphs, while the latter has but a sentence.

But if the Ward Nature Preserve's colonies of cacti are the last-standing legacy of the lost Mexicans of the Bastanchury Ranch, then it's an almost cosmic landmark. The nopal is the ultimate metaphor for Mexicans, displayed on the Mexican flag as a reminder of who they are. It's a plant that grows best in inhospitable conditions where little else can exist, one you can hack at but will still give, still thrive. And there on the Fullerton hills, long after the decline of the Ranch and the scattering of the Bastanchury Mexicans, the cactus plants stand sentry 80 years later, the most beautiful, nourishing memorial imaginable.

GARELLANO@OCWEEKLY.COM

*calendar

wednesday>
HE'S JUST GOTTA
DANCE!

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SUNDAY
GET ALL LIQUORED UP
—BUT IN A CLASSY WAY

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MONDAY
A LONG STRETCH OF
PRE-COACHELLA CONCERTS

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WEDNESDAY
A BIG HELPING OF INDIE
DREAM-POP MADNESS

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THURSDAY
LOOKING BACK ON
MATTHEW SHEPARD'S
MURDER



fri/04/12

[BURLESQUE]

Geek Love

Talk Nerdy to Me!

Remember the days when nerds clad in black hoodies were forced to conduct elaborate nighttime panty raids in order to get a little action? How times have changed. These days, pointdexters from Rivers Cuomo to Zooey Deschanel are getting the kind of play guys like Lewis Skolnick could only dream about. Demonstrating how things have pulled a 180 for dorks, Voluptuous Entertainment presents Nerdy Burlesque at the Curtis Theater. Embodied by a troupe of seven sassy, plus-sized beauties sexually celebrating all things geek, the show features entire numbers dedicated to such themes as *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Star Wars*, and *Super Mario Bros*. Though this gig promises to celebrate the socially awkward, we're pretty sure even the jocks in the crowd will pull a few boners.

Talk Nerdy to Me! at the Curtis Theater, 1 Civic Center Cir., Brea, (714) 990-7722; www.voluptuousentertainment.com. 8 p.m. Also Sat., 7 p.m. \$20-\$24.
—BRANDON FERGUSON



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[THEATER]

* All Mixed Up

A Flea in Her Ear

France's Belle Époque (Beautiful Era) brought works of art and literature to golden heights—one of which was Georges Feydeau's romantic satire *A Flea in Her Ear*. Written in 1907, *Flea* has all the delightfully madcap components of a modern day rom-com. When a woman suspects her husband is having an affair due to his avoidance performing, um, husbandly duties, she enlists her best friend to draft a mysterious love letter in an attempt to catch him in the act. But the letter, of course, falls into unintentioned hands, jealousy is set ablaze, identities are wildly mistaken and wonderfully romantic chaos ensues. Opening this weekend at the Long Beach Playhouse, don't miss this hilariously charming French farce.

A Flea in Her Ear at the Long Beach Playhouse, 5021 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 494-1014; www.lbplayhouse.org. 8 p.m. Through May 11. \$12-\$27.
—ERIN DEWITT

sat/04/13

[FOOD EVENT]

Like Butter

Tustin Lobsterfest

Lounging in the Southern California sunshine, dining on all-you-can-eat lobster and steak—life could be worse, couldn't it? It's time for the Fourth Annual Tustin Lobsterfest this weekend, so if you've got a little cash to throw around and an open calendar this Saturday, treat yourself to this outdoor indulgence jubilee. Featuring live music from Retro Mojo, a '60s cover band, Lobsterfest serves up unlimited claws, succulent tails and whole lobbs—as many as you can handle, with pools of melted golden butter on the side. But this food fest isn't *all* decadent gluttony; the net proceeds support the community-minded programs and services provided by the Tustin/Santa Ana Rotary Club. Which means stuffing your face with reckless abandon is completely justified.

Tustin Lobsterfest at Peppertree Park, First and C Sts., Tustin; www.tustinlobsterfest.com. 4 p.m. \$35-\$75
—ERIN DEWITT

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[SPORTS]

* Black and Blue

OC ROLLER GIRLS
FLAT-TRACK DERBY

Those badass OC roller babes are at it all year long, and this weekend they kick off the spritely spring season with some flat-track scuffling that should keep fans white-knuckling it 'til June. Start off Saturday at the Huntington Beach Rinks where two bouts are served up: first, whet your appetite with the co-ed clash, Chorizo & Eggs Scramble vs. the Villains, and then follow it up with the bosom-busting main-course battle between the Crash Test Bunnies and the Rolling Knockouts. You should also note that these go-go gals are trying to raise funds to build their own indoor banked track in Santa Ana, so be sure to buy plenty of skate gear, stickers and snacks in between your rootin' and tootin'.

You might also offer them the use of your tools—and don't forget to duck. OC Roller Girls at the Rinks, 5555 McFadden Ave., Huntington Beach; www.ocrollergirls.com. 5 p.m. \$13-\$22. —STACY DAVIES

sun/04/14

[CONCERT]

* All in the Family

ARLO GUTHRIE: HERE COMES THE KID

Somehow Arlo Guthrie makes being Woody Guthrie's son and the heir to his profound cultural legacy seem easy, even fun. Pop star, folkie, serious musician, storyteller and actor, he's also official booster of Woody's America—grassroots people's politics. Arlo pays tribute to his famous old man in this concert celebrating Woody's centennial, and gives musicologists, fans and sing-alongers more of his own warm and distinctly original voice. The apple did not fall far from the tree—and got only sweeter. Woody might advise you to pick it up and eat it! This birthday concert is your concert, my concert, made for you and me. Very, very family friendly!

Arlo Guthrie: Here Comes the Kid at Irvine Barclay Theatre, 4242 Campus Dr., Irvine, (949) 854-4607; www.thebarclay.org. 4 p.m. Also Sat., 8 p.m. \$25-\$46.

—ANDREW TONKOVICH

[LIBATIONS]

Smooth Finish

33rd Annual Wine Extraordinaire

Forget cheap wings and cheaper beer down at the bar, this is how you do Sunday Funday! The 33rd Annual Wine Extraordinaire showcases California's small-lot boutique wineries—those who produce 35,000 cases or less each year. So, how many wines are available for tasting? Hundreds. Pace yourselves. Culinary nibbles are provided from local restaurants to help keep you decently sober, as well as silent auctions and raffles to keep you focused. Plus, all guests receive a souvenir Riedel wineglass to swirl and sip with. Hosted by nonprofit organization Orange County Wine Society, the Wine Extraordinaire brings 85 California wineries together to

educate, illuminate and enlighten your wine IQ—and then get you nice and saucy.

33rd Annual Wine Extraordinaire at the Anaheim Hilton, 777 W. Convention Way, Anaheim, (714) 708-1636; www.ocws.org/extraordinaire. 2 p.m. \$25-\$60. 21+.

—ERIN DEWITT



mon/04/15

[CONCERT]

High Priority

The Postal Service

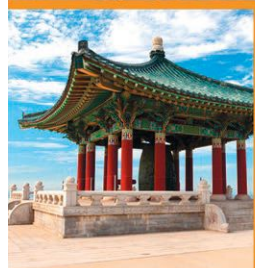
Back in 2003, the Postal Service, an electro-pop group comprised of Ben Gibbard and Jimmy Tamborello (with occasional guest vocals from Jenny Lewis), led the world in one big collective sigh with their debut and massive hit single, "Such Great Heights." And then, right after everyone became obsessed, they disbanded. When stars shine too bright, they burn out—and with both artists focusing on their main musical projects (Death Cab for Cutie and Dntel, respectively), that's pretty much what happened. But 10 years later, they finally release some new material and hit the road with a string of shows leading to—where else?—Coachella. Like many of the festival's bands performing this week, Postal Service gives fans a chance to see them without all the hassle.

The Postal Service with Baths at the Fox Pomona Theater, 301 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, (877) 283-6976; www.foxpomona.com. 8 p.m. \$35-\$45. All ages. —ERIN DEWITT



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tue/04/16

[CONCERT]

* Pre-Party

THE MAKE-UP

The Make-Up's frontman Ian Svenonius applies Kim Fowley-ian acumen to a Julian Cope-ian command of global music history, and sings in bands that operate at all times in at least three simultaneous theoretical frameworks. The Make-Up was his biggest—though we all miss Nation of Ulysses, right?—and this Coachella side show is long-awaited succor for the believers who never gave up. Don't miss his new book about rock & roll in the world beyond, either. And lets also take space to say: GAP DREAM! Once a solo project back in Ohio, Burger Records' Gap Dream relocated to OC and is now a trio doing blown-out Spacemen 3/Stacy Sutherland-style (he who put the "tar" in the 13th Floor Elevators' guitar sound) reverb jams with fearsome gusto. Recommended to the hilt!

The Make-Up with Gap Dream at the Glass House, 200 W. Second St., Pomona; www.theglasshouse.us. 7 p.m. \$21. All ages. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

wed/04/17

[THEATER]

The Right Moves

Billy Elliot

Movies usually ruin a good story. They find something great in a play or a book, and then they stink it all up with their dumb camera angles, fake explosions and drug-addicted actors. But *Billy Elliot* did the opposite—in this instance, theater imitated film and the results are anything but stinky. The 2009 Tony Award-winning Best Musical features a score by Elton John, amazing dance choreography and onstage smoking. It's sure to inspire all in attendance as they watch young, motherless Billy buck social conventions as he trades boxing gloves for ballet shoes and dances his little heart out. Warning: you may cry a little, but it won't ruin anything. Except maybe your mascara.

Billy Elliot at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787; www.scfta.org. 7:30 p.m. Through April 28. \$20-\$99.

—AMANDA PARSONS

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sparkling doo-wop, this twosome wrecked Montreal back in the '90s as the Spaceshits, getting blacklisted from venues for violent outbursts and food fights—basically, for playing a great show. Now older and wiser, they might not smash venue equipment but still get just as wild and audacious. If you love Nobunny and the Black Lips, then you probably already know King Khan and BBQ. Don't miss this show at the Constellation Room; it's going to be a riot in all the right ways.

King Khan and BBQ Show at the Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. \$14. —ERIN DEWITT



Playing Against Hate

The Laramie Project

As one of the most shocking murders of the past generation remains etched in the country's memory, films, books and songs continue to be part of the conversation of the passing of Matthew Shepard. But Tectonic Theater Project's original play is the most resonant document of the quiet (and not so quiet) voices of Laramie, Wyoming, in the aftermath of Shepard's horrific murder. Performed by hundreds of theater groups around the world (and even adapted into a film by HBO) *The Laramie Project* comes to the Chance Theater, along with its follow-up, *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*. Even with the update, *Laramie Project* doesn't feel outdated at all, especially in the wake of the recent Prop 8 debates and Supreme Court hearings. Utilizing only eight cast members, each one transforms into multiple characters, creating a unique storytelling experience with a powerful message.

The Laramie Project and *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later* at Chance Theater, 5552 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim Hills, (714) 777-3033; www.chancetheater.com. 8pm. Through May 19. \$25.

—AIMEE MURILLO

[CONCERT]

Bull's-eye

THE XX

The xx know how to make a statement with sound. The English trio generated serious buzz with their debut and sophomore albums, and continue to attract attention with the give-and-take vocals of guitarist Romy Madley-Croft and bassist Oliver Sim. The group offers a refreshing sound that's simultaneously soothing and danceable, thanks largely in part to the electronic artistry of Jamie Smith. After playing Coachella in 2010, the indie dream-popsters earned a second invitation to this year's sold-out festival. Didn't drop the \$350 for a ticket this time around? Avoid the dust and massive crowds by catching the hypnotic rockers this week at the Fox Theater. With a penchant for unexpected cover tunes and a reputation for mesmerizing live shows, the xx are definitely worth checking out.

The xx with Nite Jewel at the Fox Theater, 301 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, (909) 784-3671; www.foxpomona.com. 9 p.m. \$30-\$32.50. All ages.

—HEIDI DARBY

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thu/04/18

[CONCERT]

Out of Control

King Khan and BBQ Show

Former Spaceshits band mates and all-around amazing punk-rock freaks Blacksnake and Mark Sultan are King Khan and BBQ—and this night is their Show. Playing raw, gritty garage punk laced with



COME TO PAPA!

JOSUE RIVAS

Phuket by PCH

The Pocket Burger Shack is tiny but makes a damn fine burger and Thai roti dessert

BY EDWIN GOEI

I counted exactly two parking spots outside the Pocket Burger Shack, and I'm pretty sure one of them is actually for the tattoo parlor next door. The new restaurant is *that* small, with barely three tables butted up against the wall in a room with a maximum seating capacity of about six. If it didn't make a two-fisted burger fit for a king, you might consider the place a concession stand more than a restaurant. It inherited the "pocket" part of its name from Pocket Pita, the yummy gyro joint that used to occupy the space. I'm glad it kept that moniker because I couldn't imagine a better descriptor for it—it *is* the size of a pocket.

Surfer bric-a-brac adorns the wall, along with a few 3-by-5 prints of smiling family members at some unnamed beach hung by string and clothespin, but the Pocket Burger Shack's kitchen dominates the room. A Thai woman (who I believe is named Melissa) and her husband, a blond dude with a ponytail who doesn't speak so much as nod, man the deep-fat fryers, a griddle, a stove and a cold-prep station. When you eat here, even if you're outside at the oil drum repurposed as a round table, you'll hear the metal-on-metal clank of his spatula on that griddle and smell the simple, reassuring aroma of sizzling animal protein. He starts the burger from the same kind of standard frozen, machine-formed beef patties you might have bought from Smart & Final for your last Fourth of July barbeque, but what they manage to transform it into is somehow much more glorious.

For the house burger called "The

Pocket," the truism that anything can be made better with a fried egg, crunchy bacon and melted provolone cheese turns into a revelation. These essential elements glue everything together and heighten the other toppings: the avocado cut into big wedges, the right amount of onion, the thick-cut tomatoes, and even the single sheet of leaf lettuce that doesn't do much except act as a moisture barrier for the griddle-toasted sesame-seed bun. And when you cradle this burger in your palms, peeling back the paper as you bite deeper and deeper, juices trickle down your arm. By the time you finish, you'll lick the drippings and conclude that this burger was made like a burger should—not slapped together, but rather constructed by someone who cared about what the end product will look and taste like. Even the standard shoestring fries that accompany each burger seem the best versions of themselves, lifted out of the oil golden and deposited into the basket still sizzling hot just seconds after the burgers are assembled.

The Pocket offers other burgers and other sandwiches, including a grilled cheese and PB&J, but they really need to just serve that eponymously named burger and only that burger. In fact, it trumps a tri-tip sandwich the restaurant advertises on the marquee facing PCH. And the tri-tip is actually quite good, consisting of unnaturally tender steak cut into short strips, griddled with onion and peppers, doused with squirts of a too-sweet teriyaki and then dumped onto a spongy roll that's nearly blotted out by all that meat.

Truth is, though, I would not have gone all this way to Sunset Beach if the Pocket didn't also offer something called the Phuket Chicken Bowl. When you read the menu, the thing kind of just jumps out at you, telling you nearly everything you need to know about the owners. The dish is an autobiography by proxy and was just as I imagined it would be—a bowl of rice, boiled carrots and broccoli, topped with chicken strips colored yellow by turmeric, and drizzled with the same kind of lip-smacking peanut sauce a proper Thai restaurant would use for its satays. The bowl is good and gut-filling, but kind of basic and perhaps unnecessary in light of that burger.

It's actually not even the greatest Thai item the Pocket serves. On the sunny Saturday afternoon I went, they were experimenting with homemade egg rolls, fat golden cylinders bursting with ground pork and glass noodle, served with Thai sweet chile sauce, and presented three per order, each egg roll resting on a swooping leaf of lettuce so the skin on your finger doesn't get burned off by the hot oil. And for dessert, the Pocket Burger Shack makes a legitimate roti—a thick, oily Thai crepe rolled up into a stogie and sweetened with condensed milk. It's one of the essential roadside foods of Southeast Asia—and it's about time it found a place alongside its sister burger as one of the glories of PCH.

THE POCKET BURGER SHACK

16873 Pacific Coast Hwy., Sunset Beach, (562) 592-7771. Open daily 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Lunch for two, \$11-\$20. No alcohol.

HOLE IN THE WALL

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Straight Outta La Puente

TACO NAZO

121 S. Beach Blvd., La Habra, (562) 690-8078; www.taconazo.com.

It's fitting that Taco Nazo is all the way up in La Habra, off the second-to-last intersection in Orange County before we turn into Whittier, because its DNA is far more LA than OC. It's part of a legendary San Gabriel Valley chain, one that makes fish tacos that usually make anyone's list of the five best fish tacos in Los Angeles County. The restaurant's layout—expansive, painted bright blue, with ordering at the counter and your food announced to everyone via tinny speakers—is straight out of Whittier Boulevard (which, incidentally enough, begins just a couple of blocks away in Brea). The Marco Antonio Solís crooning on the speakers would never pass muster at a SanTana dive. And nothing against La Habra, Seal Beach or Los Alamitos, but Taco Nazo's 562 area code fundamentally makes it an alien in our strange land.

The hype is largely right about Taco Nazo's main dish: the fish taco is fluffy crunch at its most ethereal, the fish encased in clouds of golden batter, the flesh buttery and silky, the stream of crema slightly sour, slightly spicy, as refreshing as their *agua de piña*, and what ties everything together. Even better are the shrimp tacos, a colony of them smushed together and encased in that wondrous batter. And I actually think the best thing Taco Nazo sells are the fish and shrimp tortas, the bold flavors of their stars expanded upon a hefty bolillo—after eating through one of these behemoths, you're almost tempted to leave the fish taco cult altogether just to worship this god.

So my reservations about Taco Nazo? Their house salsas are forgettable. The serving of fish or shrimp, while generous, overwhelms the small, factory-made tortillas—and those tortillas taste more like GRUMA than anything Mexican. The options of meat tacos and combo plates, while necessary to ensure a *gabacho* clientele, ultimately distract. The ceviche and cocteles are so-so. I'm not going to argue with a company older than me, but people should stick to the fish and shrimp tacos and tortas at Taco Nazo, and leave the rest of the menu for *pendejos*. But its LA ways are more than welcome, especially their roasted chile güero, a marvel of botany simply dressed in salt and pepper, something so stupendous you'll eat it to its stem and think of swallowing that, too. The first one is free; any more will cost you—but you didn't drive all the way up Beach or across all of North County just for one, you know?

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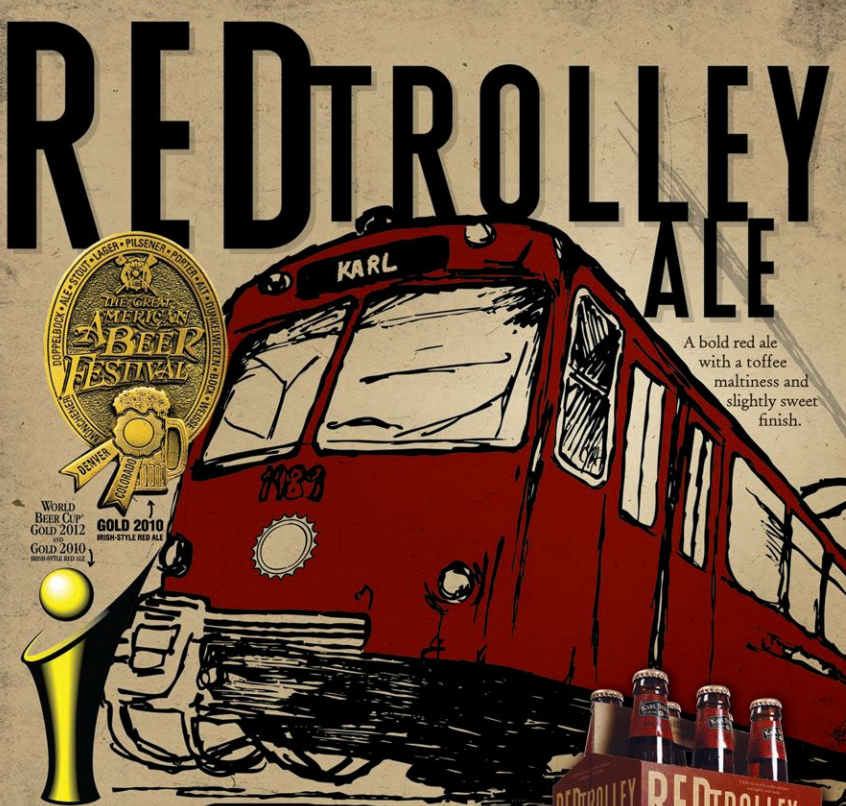


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SAUSAGE ENVY

Caser in Point

Joe Martin of Masterlink Sausage

ON THE LINE

» ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

We admit it. We expected Joe and sales manager Mike Pease to be much older. Instead, we were greeted by a couple of business-savvy guys who are not only knowledgeable, but happen to name-drop a few of our former subjects. “Hardcore since ‘64,” this specialty company produces more than 84 types of smoked sausage and meat products.

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What is your best-seller?
Portuguese Hawaiian sausage. It’s popular all-year-round.

Name a sausage that isn’t utilized enough, in your opinion:

The all-beef frank.

What’s the difference between a Portuguese and a German sausage?

The German sausages are Old World style; it’s an original recipe from Germany. The Portuguese is a new, innovative idea with infused flavors.

Favorite places to eat:

King’s Fish House, Manhattan Supper Club and Sushi Dave at The Venetian.

Most undervalued ingredient:

Cumin. It’s great, but not used in many of our products.

What sausage should we use for tailgating?

Bratwurst.

Your best recent food find:

Chilaquiles from Early Bird Cafe.

What is your beverage of choice?

Dr. Pepper during the day, and a cold one at night at any pub.

One food you can’t live without and why:
Hot dogs. They are so easy. You can microwave them, grill them or [George] Foreman.

Culinarily speaking, Orange County has the best:

Fish taco—Wahoo’s.

Where was your most recent meal?

D’Nu Eggrolls in Orange. We had noodles and a fish dish.

Tell us about your Private Label Program.

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Could you explain the sausage-making process?

Grinding. Formulation [mixing]. Stuffing. Cooking [smoking]. Packaging.

Where do you source your meats?

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Favorite meal growing up:

Spaghetti, Italian sausage and meatballs.

Weirdest thing you’ve ever eaten:

Kangaroo. Mike came up with the idea of the kangaroo Cajun flavor. It’s pretty good; more like a red meat.

You’re making breakfast. What are you having?

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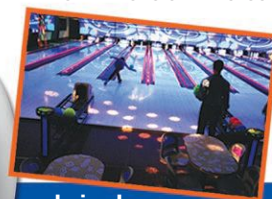
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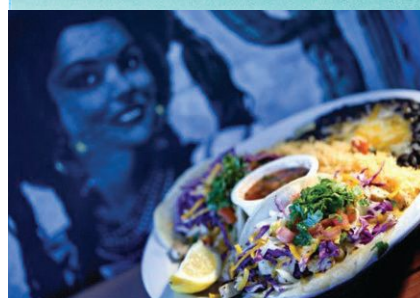
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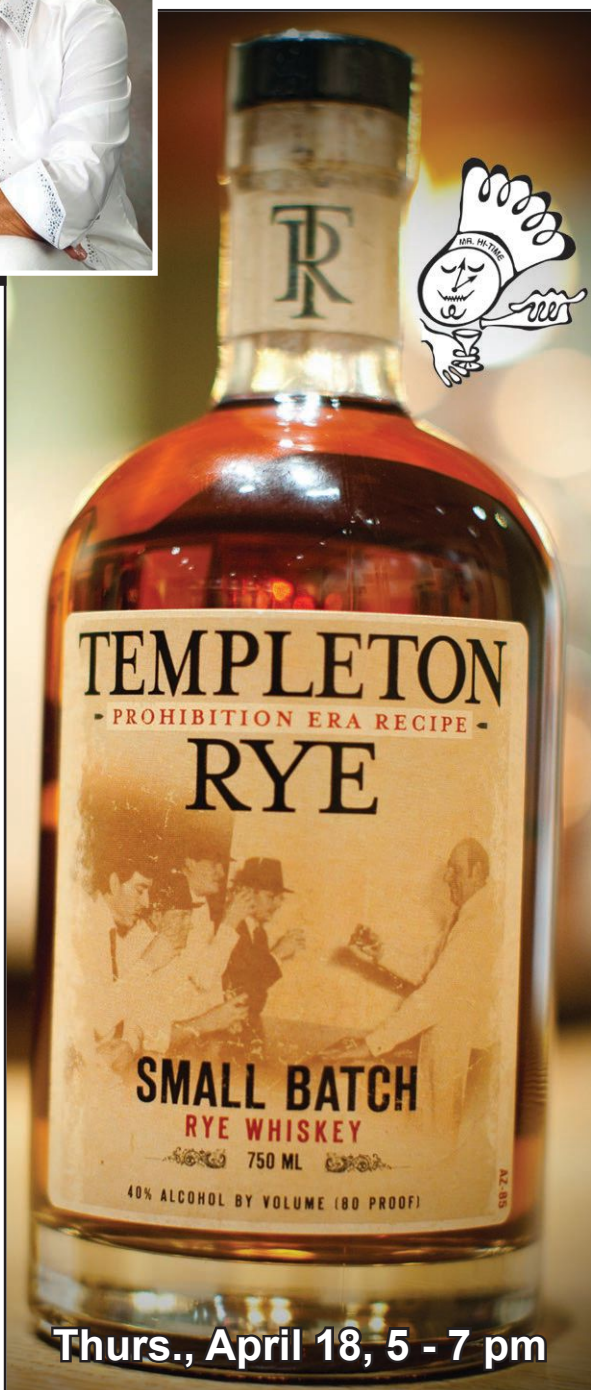


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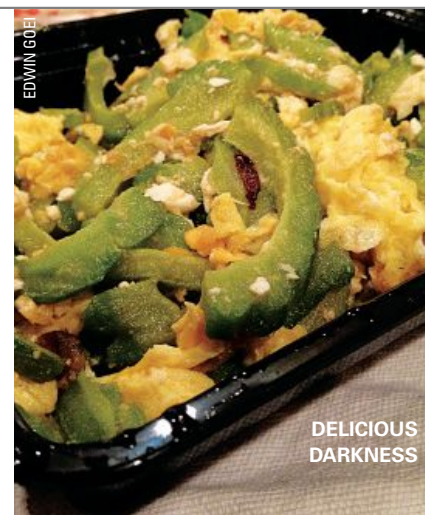
Salted Egg With Bitter Melon & Scrambled Egg at Tasty Noodle House

EAT THIS NOW

» EDWIN GOEI

Tasty Noodle House's specialties are vast and all encompassing. There's everything from Shanghai soup dumplings to stinky tofu to cold noodles slicked oily with peanut sauce. There are delicate, greaseless fried fingers of fish seasoned with seaweed, and snake gourd simmered in a thickened, clear gravy sprinkled with near-pulverized dried shrimp. The beef noodle soups are formidable. I've only just begun to crack the surface of a menu that will take years to explore. But among all that I've tried so far, I already have a favorite, the one dish that I keep ordering again and again, visit after visit, takeout after takeout: the salted egg with bitter melon and scrambled egg.

Rare is the food that does what it says and means what it does more honestly than bitter melon. No bones about it: bitter melon is bitter. If the flavor had a color, it would be whatever the opposite of sunlight would be. Detractors often say



DELICIOUS DARKNESS

that bitter melon tastes that way because it's a deterrent; they'll say this plant is not meant to be eaten. Tell that to hundreds of millions of Filipinos, Indians, Chinese and Okinawans, who know it's healthy and very refreshing.

Tasty Noodle House's rendition, made with crumbled, salted egg as well as scrambled egg, is kind of amazing. It's as greasy as a stir-fry can get, but the bitterness answers the grease, and the two kinds of egg balance the bitterness. Also, the more you reheat the leftovers, the better the bitter melon tastes, which is not to say it becomes less bitter or more mellow, just softer. Besides, you want that bracing bitterness. It makes you feel ... alive!

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DRINK OF THE WEEK

» LP HASTINGS

The Great Awakening at Steamer's Jazz Club

When the Great Awakening arrives at your table sitting in a champagne coupe, all a-glistening in the candlelight, the first thing you should do is smell it. Clean citrus gathers in your schnozz and eventually coalesces into the scent of a wonderful, alcoholic creamsicle. The drink is a pale, canary yellow in color, with a generous layer of creamy-white foam; it looks like something Marie Antoinette would drink while sitting on a plump, gilded cushion. Buffalo Trace and Nouvelle-Orléans absinthe are shaken with a Lillet Blanc reduction, Cointreau, lemon and an egg white to make the foam.

But, wait: this is Steamer's, the legendary jazz club that has held hip down in downtown Fullerton almost longer than everyone—huh? Recently, bartenders Sean Schickling and Lucie Wood overhauled the cocktail menu to ride the craft-booze wave. They based their Great Awakening on a Prohibition-era cocktail called the Corpse Survivor 2, but gave it a much more romantic name.



LEMON PIE IN A GLASS

THE DRINK

It tastes like a lemon meringue pie in a glass, and Lucie calls it "the ultimate morning drink." Similar to an Orange Julius, its light citrus flavor is refreshing and balanced, and the egg-white foam lingers on your palate with its creamy comfort. Lucie says that most OC residents are still uncomfortable with the thought of drinking raw egg white, but trust us: people have been drinking fizzies since before the Volstead Act. "Besides," Lucie says, laughing, "the amount of alcohol in there would kill anything." So stop being an anti-foam-ite, and drink!

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I SEE WHITE PEOPLE

The Brooklyn Museum

42 almost makes a flesh-and-blood man of its hero

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

A likable hagiography as nuanced as a plaque at the Cooperstown Hall of Fame, Brian Helgeland's Jackie Robinson bio *42* finds a politic solution to the challenge Quentin Tarantino faced last year with *Django Unchained*: How to craft a crowd-pleasing multiplex period piece whose villain is, essentially, "all white people"?

Helgeland solves this by being ingratiating, sometimes too much so. A newsreel-style opening offers the historical context Hollywood can't trust high schools to have provided; in it narrator Andre Holland toasts to "the greatest generation"—an honorific that takes on ironic weight as the film amasses its considerable power. Sure, they licked Hitler, but how can we call these folks the greatest Americans ever when they freed up their afternoons to head down to the ballpark and shout "nigger" at Jackie Robinson?

"I realize that attitude is part of your cultural heritage," Harrison Ford rumbles as Branch Rickey, the general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, to a minor-league coach who expresses distaste about taking Robinson on with the Montreal Royals, previously a whites-only team. ("Montreal Royals": has so much major-league failure ever been built into a single name?) That coach comes around, because he and Rickey—to flip a racist phrase of the day—are each *one of the good ones*, white folks who transcend their upbringing and become credits to their race.

In the first half, grand moments of Robinson's life (and American history) drift

past like parade floats: well-crafted, incidentally arresting, but not strung together into a dramatic narrative. Chadwick Boseman, who stars as Robinson, at first seems given only two things to play: quiet confidence at the plate and even quieter stoicism when insulted by white people. He aces both, but he and the movie both get more interesting the closer Robinson gets to the Dodgers and Ebbets Field—here a video-game re-creation that never quite fools the eye.

In the majors, we have a story, one that grows more and more compelling right up until the ridiculously protracted, climactic slo-mo base running. Some Dodgers revolt against Robinson's arrival, hotels refuse to book the team on the road, and then there are the death threats, the pitchers aiming for his face and the Philadelphia coach who actually shouts, "You don't belong here! Get that through your thick monkey skull!" A dusty intimacy distinguishes the baseball scenes, which are excellent, if abbreviated. Robinson's duels with pitchers are especially involving, both at the plate and on base, where he harrows the bastards like Bugs Bunny might Elmer Fudd. Helgeland's commitment to ball-game detail invigorates the film; besides the rousing pitch outs, we're treated to announcer Red Barber deeming a game "tighter than a new pair of shoes on a rainy day," and a 10-year-old boy explaining a balk to his mother.

As Robinson takes the white world's abuse, Boseman's eyes moisten, redden and finally seem to scab over with anger

and hurt. Those scabs get ripped off, once, courtesy of that Philly coach and a couple tough at-bats. Boseman—so adept at holding back, at suffering—at last gets to rage. Off the field, he shatters a bat and howls, a moment of welcome rawness that Helgeland immediately balms with

Rickey insists that the only color he cares about is green, as in the money black ballplayers are bound to bring in.

avuncular words from Ford's pleasantly absurd Rickey. In the role, Ford plumbs the depths of his voice box, and phlegms up his breathing; he sounds like Walter Matthau doing Nixon. After the fighting-senior nonsense of that last Indiana Jones movie, he's finally playing an old man for real, hunched over, tweeded out George Will-style, and never even close to punching anybody.

Rickey integrates baseball against its will, and Robinson, of course, wins over the Flatbush Faithful. But this isn't presented as the usual victory for principled liberalism. The movie is engineered to appeal to what *Variety* calls a "faith-based audience"—which, really, describes anyone who still finds hope enough to pony up for movie tickets. Rickey insists that the only color he cares about is green, as in the money black ballplayers are bound to bring in. For most of the

film he's a free-market integrationist, a best-case example of the argument that the greater good is yoked to the invisible hand. A devout Methodist, his quotations from scripture add to *42*'s steady hum of good-book moralizing. There's little of the drinking or swearing you'd expect in a baseball movie, and Rickey even gets to preach against adultery. (The Bible verses segregationists used to support their cause are conspicuously absent.)

Boseman mostly manages to play a flesh-and-blood man despite *42*'s attempts to present him as a statue just unveiled. Helgeland limits the scope to Robinson's first major league season, so we're spared the usual through-the-decades biopic rush. Another boon: Robinson's marriage is a happy one, and Nicole Beharie, playing his wife, gets to smile and talk baseball rather than endure the usual long-suffering bride-of-the-famous-man routine.

Still, the movie sugars up Robinson's story, and like too many period pieces it summons some vague idea of a warmer, simpler past by bathing everything in thick amber light, as if each scene is one of those preserved mosquitoes that begat the monsters of *Jurassic Park*. It's the honeyed light of nostalgia, but what exactly about this 1947 are we supposed to yearn for today? That era's more-open racism? The suffering endured by anyone who stood up to it? The novelty of a black man taking a previously white job—and catching serious hell for it every single day?

Let's go with "afternoon games."

was written and directed by Brian Helgeland, and stars Chadwick Boseman, Harrison Ford, Nicole Beharie, Christopher Meloni and Andre Holland. Rated PG-13.

opening

42 See "The Brooklyn Museum," page 25.

ongoing

ADMISSION Tina Fey is a killer comic actress—she could probably start and stop a Rolex with nothing but brainwaves. But even though she brings much more to the role than the movie asks of her, *Admission* doesn't have the courage to suggest that a childless woman who's doing work she loves just may have it all—or at least her all. Fey plays Princeton admissions officer Portia Nathan, a character who admittedly doesn't quite love her work, though she doesn't know that, yet. What's missing from Portia's life? Might it be... a child? An old college classmate, John Pressman (Paul Rudd), the half-twinkly, half-insufferable principal of an alternative high school, has contacted her about a weird but brilliant student named Jeremiah (Nat Wolff). Pressman believes Jeremiah might have a shot at Princeton. He also drops the bomb that Jeremiah might be Portia's son. Once she begins to

see herself in him, Portia begins pulling Ivy League strings for this economically disadvantaged yet extraordinarily bright kid, who might be what he Princeton student body needs—and what the admissions system guarantees Princeton is unlikely to get. Great comic actresses—like a Stanwyck or Streisand—can have a direct line to feelings we'd rather not air. Fey is on that track; her Portia is both maddening and deeply sympathetic—there's warmth behind her crispness, even if it's not the fresh-baked-cookie kind. If *Admission* were sharper, it could be the ultimate Mother's Day movie: A picture about a nonmother who cares deeply for the next generation, even when it hasn't sprung directly from her own womb. **(PG-13)** Stephanie Zacharek. *Countywide*.

BLANCANIEVES The new film from Spanish writer/director Pablo Berger is a silent, black-and-white film so witty, riveting, and drop-dead gorgeous that moviegoers may forget to notice that they can't hear the dialogue. Astutely, Berger has chosen to wrap his experiment around a tale everyone knows: the perils of that sweet beauty, Snow White. Here, she is Carmen (Sofia

Oria), born in 1920s Seville to a mother who dies in childbirth. After the death of her grandmother, Carmen is sent to live with the paralyzed bullfighter father (Daniel Giménez Cacho) she's never met, as well as his new wife and former nurse (Maribel Verdú)—the very measure of a wicked stepmother. Eventually, of course, there will be dwarfs, but Berger's seven lugs are bullfighters, not miners, and one of them (Sergio Dorado) looks at Carmen (now played by Macarena García) the way a prince looks at his princess. Don't expect Berger's *Snow White* to play out like Grimm's tale or Disney's masterpiece. In the hardscrabble reality of the flesh-and-blood real world, living happily ever after, the filmmaker suggests, is complicated stuff. **(Not Rated)** Chuck Wilson. *Edwards University Town Center 6, Irvine; Regency Rancho Niguel 8, Laguna Niguel*.

THE CALL WWE Studios, the film production arm of World Wrestling Entertainment, breaks from its usual target audience of guys who like films about shirtless, muscley men with *The Call*, a suspense thriller starring adequate actress and Academy Award recipient Halle Berry as an overcommitted, hotshot 911 emergency operator. When she makes a rookie-level error that costs a teenage girl her life, she opts to hang up her call center headset—until the girl's killer kidnaps another teen victim. Locked in a car trunk with a prepaid cell phone, she calls 911. The middle third of the film comprises the phone call, a tight 40 minutes in which the girl, guided by Berry, deploys the contents of the trunk (screwdriver, paint roller handle, cans of white matte finish) to make her kidnapper's vehicle more conspicuous while Berry presses her for details she can relate to the police. In a nod to the

studio's usual demographic, two-time WWE tag-team champion David Otunga plays officer Jake Devans, though fans hoping for spinning headlock elbow drops or backflip kicks will be disappointed. When the emergency call ends, Berry drives out to the crime scene the cops traced down and goes all Clarice Starling inside the spooky cabin where the bad guy keeps his Saw basement, which has to be seen as a departure from the film's thin blue line of realism, or the workaday reality that WWE became known for when the Undertaker defeated Kane with his signature Tombstone piledriver at Wrestlemania XX. **(R)** Chris Packham. *Countywide*.

THE CROODS Regardless of its cave-men-acquire-brains plot, *The Croods* is no more evolved than your average kids' film, boasting modern attitude, animal-sidekick comic relief, familial struggles, and roller coaster action. While rife with contemporary lingo that makes little sense for a story about a prehistoric clan facing extinction, Kirk DeMico and Chris Sanders' bouncy CG adventure at least partially offsets its stock formula with passable one-liners and sincere heart. The latter comes from the tense relationship between cro-mag dad Grug (Nicolas Cage), who values survival in dark caves over living in the light, and curious and headstrong daughter Eep (Emma Stone), whose rebelliousness blossoms after meeting creative-thinking, fire-making hunk Guy (Ryan Reynolds). Amid chase sequences set in an *Avatar*-ish old-Earth of colorful fantasy animals and enormous vegetation, Guy introduces the Croods to inventions like shoes and umbrellas—newfangled ideas that threaten Grug's patriarchal authority and bond with Eep. That these ancient ancestors of ours have superhuman

strength and speed is as perplexing as their banter is incessant. Their good-natured tale, however, does sweetly reconfirm that there's life still in the oldest jokes, such as a father's fear of his daughter dating—or, via a running gag involving Grug and Gran (Cloris Leachman), of a husband's hatred of his mother-in-law. **(PG)** Nick Schager. *Countywide*.

EMPEROR Tommy Lee Jones pontificates and poses with hands on hips as General Douglas MacArthur during his scant screen time in *Emperor*, vainly trying to muster up a showy performance that might save this historical drama from drowning in torpor. He cannot, alas, given that Peter Webber's film spends so much of its energy detailing the efforts of General Bonner Fellers (Matthew Fox) to investigate, at the conclusion of World War II, whether Japan's Emperor Hirohito was responsible for Pearl Harbor, and should thus be tried and hung for war crimes. Given its true-life basis, the story is already devoid of suspense regarding Hirohito's ultimate fate, and Feller's inquiry is made more sluggish by dramatically inert conversations with Japanese officials who don't realize that their lack of cooperation will doom their beloved emperor to the gallows. Their desire to praise the values of Japanese culture—honor, loyalty, devotion—is shared by the film. Amid the ham-fisted moral equivalency, Webber indulges in flashbacks to Feller's ill-fated romance with a Japanese beauty (Eriko Hatsune). Those sequences are a clunky means of conflating the personal and political, and are ultimately low-lighted by abjectly corny scenes of Fox and Hatsune slow-mo frolicking in a sun-dappled bamboo forest. **(PG-13)** Nick Schager. *Countywide*.

EVIL DEAD In this wittily gory remake of the revered 1981 debut of *Oz the Great and Powerful* filmmaker Sam Raimi, five college-age friends go to the ol' cabin in the woods where the nerd of the group (Lou Taylor Pucci) commits a common camping mistake: reading aloud from a book of the dead. Cue an invisible demon that uses tree limbs to rape and thereby possess Mia (Jane Levy), who returns to the cabin eager to slice and dice her friends, as well as her brother (Shiloh Fernandez). In a virtuoso feature debut, Uruguayan-born writer/director Fede Alvarez and co-writer Rodo Sayagues honor the motifs of the original, from the camera rushing pell-mell through the woods to signal the demon's arrival, to the deployment of a chainsaw in the final showdown. But the plotting as a whole feels fresh, as does the emphasis on women strong enough to defend themselves. Alvarez also honors Raimi, who co-produced this remake, in another key way: The film's special effects are created with old-fashioned prosthetics and buckets of blood, which lend a horrifically tactile reality to such moments as when the possessed Mia slices her own tongue in two. Dare ya not to look. **(R)** Chuck Wilson. *Countywide*.

FROM UP ON POPPY HILL "It's right out of a cheap melodrama," one character remarks in *From up on Poppy Hill*, after a particularly extreme twist of fate—yet this film's gentle storytelling manages to extract the emotional payoffs of melodrama without ruining one's suspension of disbelief. A film about fathers and children, and the way we use the past as a prism for the present, *Poppy Hill* is fittingly a collaboration between Japanese anime master Hayao Miyazaki (*Spirited Away*) and his son Goro (Tales From Earthsea). Our endearing protagonist is Umi (voiced by Sarah Bolger), a high school student in Yokohama, 1963. With an absent mother and a dead father,

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Friday
May 3rd



Umi has plenty of responsibilities, but adolescence being what it is, she's dragged into helping her crush, Shun (Anton Yelchin), save a local clubhouse from demolition. If the film was merely a depiction of adolescent longing, its portrayal of that state alone would be worth your \$12—unconstrained by the limitations of the human face, the animators paint remarkably nuanced states of teenage distress onto their principals. (You may be brought back to your own pimple-laden past.) Yet *Poppy Hill* also explores Umi's attempts to identify with a father she barely knew for the sake of her own budding individuality, and Shun's attachment to the clubhouse out of respect for its past. Some third-act revelations may really test the scales of plausibility, but *Poppy Hill* ultimately is not about its story as much as the emotional states it probes. **(Not Rated)** Zachary Wigon. *Edwards University Town Center 6, Irvine; Art Theatre of Long Beach.*

GINGER & ROSA Private dramas unfold against the backdrop of broader historical terrors in Sally Potter's absorbing coming-of-age drama *Ginger & Rosa*, set in London in 1962 as fears of nuclear war loom. For Ginger (Elle Fanning), the more central of the two eponymous teenage protagonists, the world—on both the micro and macro levels—is about to burst. Best-known for 1992's lush *Orlando*, Potter here forgoes her earlier unconventional predilections for a simple, direct narrative, although she sometimes overemphasizes points she's already made clear. The connection between nuclear bombs and nuclear families is made quite literal in the prologue: Opening with archival footage of an atomic mushroom cloud, the movie cuts to the birth of the title characters, both pushed out into the world the same year as the bombing of Hiroshima. Seventeen years later, best friends Ginger and Rosa (Alice Englert) have blossomed into self-dramatizing adolescents, always decked out in turtlenecks, toggle coats, and other Beatnik-inspired ensembles. Ginger name-drops Simone de Beauvoir and proudly announces that is going to be a poet, while Rosa favors more carnal pleasures. Their responses to radio broadcasts about nuclear buildup also reflect their diverging beliefs: Ginger thinks they should protest; Rosa suggests they pray. Although the climax is overripe and poorly paced, Potter restores the calmer, observational

tone and mood that distinguish much of *Ginger & Rosa* in its closing minutes, a lovely summation of its main character's age-appropriate contradictions. Sitting silently, Ginger reflects, somewhat grandiosely, on what awaits her as an adult in a poem about the future—verse that is rendered in the simple rhyming scheme of a child. **(PG-13)** Melissa Anderson. *Countywide.*

HAVA NAGILA (THE MOVIE)

Something like the doc equivalent of a Yiddish-humor bathroom book, vet TV-doc producer Roberta Grossman's tirelessly glib little movie tracks the cultural trajectory of the eponymous song, "from Ukraine to YouTube," and makes a big *tzimmes* along the way about "being Jewish," as if that required practice. The historical roots of the song in the nigunim of Eastern European shtetls are traced within the first 15 minutes; thereafter, Grossman relishes doodling on the American diaspora and the growth of affluent Jewish culture after World War II, when the ubiquitous party ditty got covered by everyone from Harry Belafonte (interviewed) to Bob Dylan (not), and grotesque bar mitzvah fetes were the defiant answer to memories of the Holocaust. Patronizing from toe to chin, the film opts continually for self-congratulation and cheesy aphorism, and could've-should've been comfortable slotted into a half hour of airtime on TJC (channel 528 on Time Warner Cable). **(Not Rated)** Michael Atkinson. *Edwards Westpark 8, Irvine.*

HIMMATWALA The pseudo-progressivism inherent in *Himmatwala*, an action-comedy remake of the 1983 Bollywood action-drama of the same name, makes toxic camp of otherwise meaningless kitsch. Though the film's lead protagonist, played by Ajay Devgan, exclaims that history should not repeat itself, nothing about the new *Himmatwala* is different from the old one except that the remake's creators constantly wink at their audience. Set in 1983, this *Himmatwala* nostalgically re-imagines the '80s as a time when real women, wearing hoop earrings and scrunchies, were terrorized by misogynists, and real men earned money by fighting in disco clubs decorated with pictures of Jean-Claude Van Damme and Pac-Man. *Himmatwala* otherwise follows the same plot as its 30-year-old predecessor. Ravi (Devgan) returns home to get revenge on Sher Singh (Mahesh Manjrekar), the corrupt politician that

drove his father to suicide. To get back at Singh, Ravi hatches a plan with Rekha (Tamannaah Bhatia), Singh's daughter, and blackmails his rival by threatening to leave Rekha pregnant out of wedlock. The preposterousness of Ravi's plan is symptomatic of the prevailing wrong-headedness. While the creators constantly joke about how dated their film is, their latently sexist avenging-white-knight hero isn't substantially different from the original Ravi. So while Ravi's denim vest is now supposed to be funny, the fact that, as in the earlier film, he needs to stop a thug from plunging a knife into his girlfriend's crotch is not. **(Not Rated)** Simon Abrams. *Edwards Westpark 8, Irvine.*

THE HOST As with her *Twilight* series, the infelicities of Stephenie Meyer's *The Host*—drab dialogue, ridiculous plotting, more emotional crises than story—are enlivened by its thematic eccentricities. For all her programmatic love triangles, Meyer's fantasy is at least humane. You know how most fantasy adventures films have their orcs or stormtroopers or Germans who the good guys have a grand time genociding? *The Host's* heroine—or heroines, more on that later—actually forbids her friends from killing any of the parasitic space-protzoa who have taken over the bodies of most of the Earth's population and are actively hunting down the last human survivors. Of course, that's only after she's slumped about for much of the story (in true Meyer fashion) trying to choose between two hunks who seemed to me interchangeable—despite living holed up in a Utah cave, far from civilization, both appear to have gym memberships and limitless access hair product. Once she is stirred to action, the heroine—a part-human, part-alien frump played by Saoirse Ronan—argues for peace. This isn't *quite* like if Princess Leia, post-Alderaan, urged appeasement with the Empire as she sulked over whether she preferred Luke or Han. Instead, Ronan's Melanie understands the low odds of a human victory and hits upon a solution that isn't all pew-pew. She even suggests to the surviving Earthlings that best way to handle the invading force is to show it love—the thing that makes us human, and the thing that the aliens can learn from. The movie's a slog, but it's nice to see Hollywood offer an option besides killing every motherfucker in the room. **(PG-13)** Alan Scherstuhl. *Countywide.*

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CALVIN HARRIS

Saturday
May 4th

IDENTITY THIEF Here's a breakthrough, of a sort: The funniest scenes in *Identity Thief* are of Melissa McCarthy and Jason Bateman beating the hell out of each other. McCarthy—playing a multi-named serial liar and credit-card fraud artist we'll call Diana—clocks Jason Bateman with a vicious neck punch. Bateman—as yet another sane fellow whose life is infested with plot-driving crazies—clocks, tackles, and even brains her with the stolen bric-a-brac that clutters Diana's home. I'm not going to argue that this man hitting this woman for laughs is a progressive triumph. But it is at least a victory for whatever is the opposite of sexism. McCarthy gets bashed about like a Stooge, and she bashes back with riotous abandon. Sadly, the rest of the movie is a shambles. So, let it be said, this one time only: Here is a comedy that really could use more inter-gender violence. (I'll leave it to you to parse the sexual politics of McCarthy's insult after Bateman beans her with a knickknack: "You throw like a fuckin' girl!") The rest of the film, they're solo acts, each doing what audiences expect: She yells and exhibits an unsocialized horniness; he regards her with dismay and disgust. Yes, disgust. There's no way around it: The producers of *Identity Thief* seem to find McCarthy's real-world body loathsome. Her big comic sex scene is ruined by director Seth Gordon's refusal to shoot her below the chin, and her Diana is later freighted with a sad-clown back story and given a princess makeover—penance, perhaps, for having roughhoused like the boys in the first reel. (R) Alan Scherstuhl. *Countywide*.

THE INCREDIBLE BURT

WONDERSTONE Steve Carell's gift is for men who might drown in their own obliviousness. When his 40-year-old virgin insists that breasts feel like bags of sand, our laughter isn't just at his absurd cluelessness. It's at Carell the performer's ability to lay bare our near-universal impulse to lie to cover up our own ignorance. Carell again plays oblivious in the fitfully inspired magician comedy *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone*, but he doesn't play human. As the magician of the title, he's a dick David Copperfield on the decline, a third-rate casino act grinding through the same tricks in the same show he's been doing for a decade. Unlike that virgin, Wonderstone is cruel and dumb, capa-

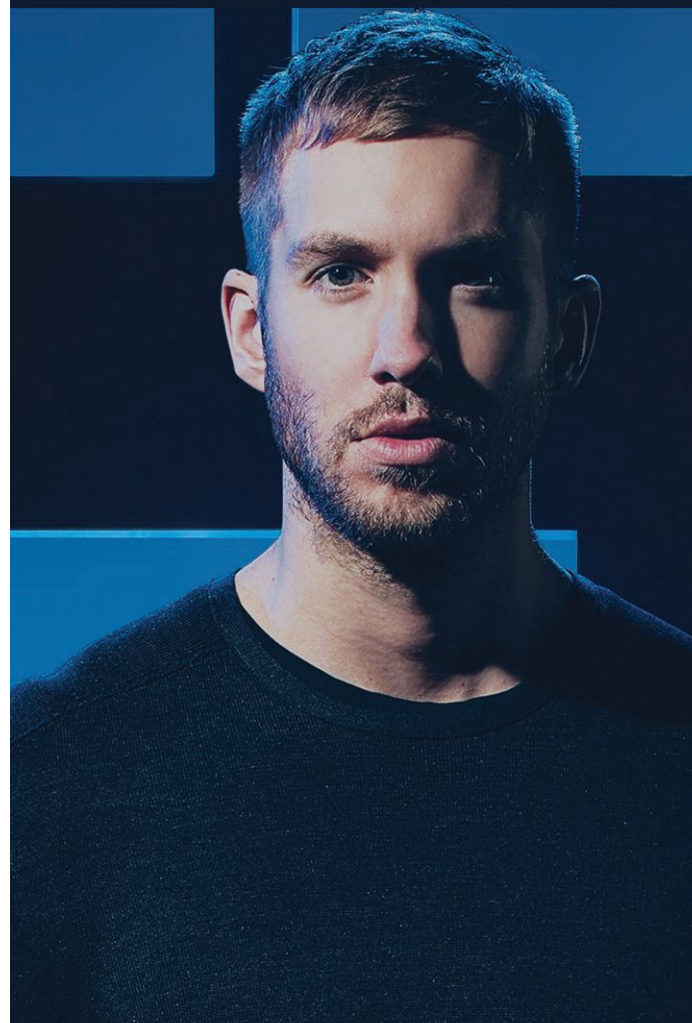
ble only of the most selfish and least inventive responses, which stifles the long scenes of him sexually harassing poor Olivia Wilde (as Wonderstone's assistant) or berating Steve Buscemi (as Wonderstone's bickering partner in magic). It's a Will Ferrell-style part played by an actor lacking Will Ferrell's abandon. The film's biggest surprise is that, after Wonderstone loses everything, we're expected to feel something besides impatience as he learns to become a better person—and gapes like a child at the wonder of magic. The supporting cast is all first rate, although Wilde is asked to do nothing more than be pretty and earnest and put-upon. Done up like a goonish Brad Pitt, Jim Carrey applies his cartoon expressiveness to its most judicious ends in years, and James Gandolfini kills as a casino owner with no time for bullshit. (PG-13) Alan Scherstuhl. *Countywide*.

JURASSIC PARK 3D "They do move in herds," Sam Neill marvels, purportedly gazing at his director's miracle dinosaurs but in reality directing his wonderment right into the camera—and right out at us, the viewers whose herdability made such smash successes of *Jurassic Parks* one and two. (Our failure to turn out for director Joe Johnston's part three suggests that we at least prefer to be corralled by a master.) If you want to feel better about how Steven Spielberg can cue your brain to stirrings of fear or awe, it helps to think of him not as an artist but as an m.c.: Dude moves the crowd. Now converted to more-impressive-than-usual-3D, the original *Jurassic Park* is again set to herd in an audience, this time of parents already appreciative of its uneasy mix of Spielbergian wonder and Spielbergian terror, and of kids ready to discover the perverse pleasure of watching actors in their own demo scream and weep at the gnashing of T. rexes. *Schindler's List*, the other Spielberg hit of '93, acknowledged that children in terror are actually no fun at all; perhaps that's why that one's shown as homework and this one's given a multiplex re-issue. The T. rex is worth the wait, but the wait itself is even more memorable—that water-shaking rumble scene was the go-to demo reel for peddlers of surround-sound home theater systems for most of the '90s. For all the still-dazzling CGI and creature puppetry, what sells this is the storm's-coming wonder Spielberg

hadn't summoned so smartly since *Close Encounters*, here spliced with the candied dread of *Jaws*. (PG-13) Alan Scherstuhl. *Countywide*.

THE LAST EXORCISM PART II When the creators of *The Last Exorcism Part II* swapped pseudo-verité realism for psychological realism, they made it a lot harder to take their franchise seriously, especially now that you get a good look at actress Ashley Bell, who reprises her role as Nell, the possessed victim of demonic rape. Most of *Part II* follows Nell's attempts to overcome her fears of being attacked by the demon Abalam again. Throughout, Abalam's role as the negative psychic residue of the otherwise neurotically sheltered Nell's first hormonal stirrings (boys!) is overstated. Various well-meaning but incompetent parties offer Nell help, like her equally inexperienced boyfriend, Chris (Spencer Treat Clark), her fair-weather teenage gal pals, and the ghost of her abusive father, who keeps trying to caress Nell and then shoot her. Nobody really cares about Nell as nobody's observant enough to notice how shaken she is by Abalam's conspicuous visitations, like when Nell has a vision of her father being eviscerated by one of her new friends, then-possessed by the demon. The film's supporting characters are only distracted by Nell's behavior long enough to gawk at her. Everyone is insensitive for no good reason, depriving Nell's hormonal problems of any psychological weight. The original film's jump-scare chills similarly don't work now that, minus its found footage, pseudo-documentary style, you can actually see the monsters jumping out of the shadows. (PG-13) Simon Abrams. *AMC Fullerton 20, Fullerton; AMC Orange 30, Orange*.

OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN The first of this year's dueling *Die Hard* in the *White House* opuses (to be followed in June by Roland "Independence Day" Emmerich's *White House Down*) begins with a slo-mo Old Glory and the first horns and snare drums of composer Trevor Morris' John-Williams-on-steroids score—and, well, things get a lot more "America! Fuck yeah!" from there. Directed at a jingoistic fever pitch by Training Day's Antoine Fuqua, *Olympus Has Fallen* quickly hurtles through the bare minimum of exposition—a square-jawed, newly widowed POTUS (Aaron Eckhart); a brooding ex-Secret Service hotshot



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(Gerard Butler) who blames himself for the First Lady's death—before unleashing a small army of North Korean baddies on Pennsylvania Avenue's most desirable address. What follows is an all-you-can-eat buffet of shock, from the retro, *Robocop*-era visual effects to the Delta Force-worthy parade of Oscar winners and nominees in peril (Secretary of State Melissa Leo, Speaker of the House Morgan Freeman, Secret Service Director Angela Bassett, Army Chief of Staff Robert Forster) to the utterly shameless 9/11 imagery (including Beltway tourists crushed by chunks of an imploding Washington Monument). A *Red Dawn* for the Tea Party era, *Olympus Has Fallen* is pretty ridiculously entertaining—or at least entertainingly ridiculous—for long stretches, dulled only by the realization that there are many parts of the country where this will play as less than total farce. (R) Scott Foundas. *Countywide*.

OZ THE GREAT AND POWERFUL

James Franco rivals his calamitous performance as Oscar host in Disney and director Sam Raimi's gargantuan attempt to turn L. Frank Baum's children's novels—and one of the most beloved of all Hollywood movies—into a wellspring of fresh product tie-ins and theme-park rides. A wildly inventive, unpredictable actor when he wants to be, Franco is all wrong for the role of a huckster sideshow magician who finds himself somewhere over the rainbow, trying to convince the good people of a besieged kingdom that he's their prophesied savior. Reading his lines with the sneering warble of the young Dennis Hopper and flashing a strained smile that's more disturbing than dashing, Franco may be the least convincing flimflam man in movie history, more young Norman Bates than the man who would be Oz. He's surrounded by a Day-Glo freak-out of special effects and two very resourceful actresses, Rachel Weisz and Michelle Williams, reduced to glowering at each other and unleashing bursts of electromagnetic fury from their fingertips. If only the movie could run off with Mila Kunis' radiant Theodora, a nominal "good" witch whose passions rage louder than most, who gives her heart too willingly and who, when betrayed, turns positively green with jealousy. She's by far the most dimensional being in this flaccid 3-D affair. (PG) Scott Foundas. *Countywide*.

THE PLACE BEYOND THE PINES *Blue Valentine* director Derek Cianfrance makes a concerted stab at the epic with this two-and-a-half-hour roundelay of failed fathers and unloved sons trapped in a vicious cycle of emasculated rage. Ryan Gosling (and his chiseled abdomen) stars as a motorcycle stunt driver in a traveling carnival who, upon learning he's fathered an infant son, puts down roots in upstate New York and becomes an armed bank robber instead. He eventually crosses paths with a rookie cop (a terrific Bradley Cooper), who becomes the central figure of the movie's second act, a charismatic climber in a precinct full of dirty cops (one played—in a folly of typecasting—by Ray Liotta). Finally, it's 15 years later, and the sons of both cop and robber (excellent newcomers Emory Cohen and Dane DeHaan) find themselves sorting out their entwined destinies. Cianfrance's third feature has a go-for-broke, everything-I-ever-wanted-to-put-into-a-movie quality to it; it seems to have been conceived in a dazed rush after marathon readings of Aeschylus, Hemingway and Larry Brown. But while the acting is excellent, the metaphors are heavy, the plotting thin and repetitive. Sure to inspire indifference and cultish admiration in

nearly equal measure, this extravagant mess may someday be reevaluated as a misunderstood masterpiece. (R) Scott Foundas. *Edwards University Town Center 6, Irvine; Century Stadium 25, Orange*.

THE PLAYROOM A child character endowed with an adult's intelligence is often a disappointing puppet through which an author articulates his or her own views. But allowing a brilliant fictional child her own voice and agency (not to mention age-appropriate behavior) represents this whole other imaginative leap—riskier, but way more interesting and rewarding if actually pulled off. *The Playroom*, directed by Julia Dyer from an outstanding script by her sister, the late Gretchen Dyer, is a funny, sad story of a single evening in the lives of four brilliant children neglected by self-absorbed parents. Maggie (Olivia Harris), the eldest of the Cantwell children, shepherds her younger siblings through the film's first five minutes with an older sister's mixture of affection and exasperation, settling them into their after-school routines of homework and play. Then she cleans up the remnants of her parents' alcoholic debauch from the previous night and sneaks away for the one brief moment of fulfillment: She loses her virginity in the family's garage. The children spend the night in the playroom, but when they're unable to sleep, Maggie tells them an improvised bedtime story with protagonists whose problems map to their own. Shards of the story punctuate the film, a tale of orphans, loss, and flight. J.D. Salinger's genius child Franny Glass knows that she flies in her sleep because when she wakes up, her fingers are dusty from touching the light bulbs. That's overly precious; *The Playroom* jettisons all things cute but still takes flight by portraying the characters, adult and juvenile, under direct lighting, and asking you if you care about them. (Not Rated) Chris Packham. *Regency South Coast Village, Santa Ana*.

RENOIR In *Renoir*, a languorous look at the last days of the storied painter, we get a view of the artist at odds with a blue-haired lady's notion of her favorite impressionist. It's a pivotal moment of Renoir family history, with father and son both taking creative and sexual inspiration from a shared love object: Pierre-Auguste's last model-muse. Future filmmaker Jean Renoir (a vulnerable Vincent Rottier)

is the middle son, recovering from a WWI wound at the family farm at Cagnes-sur-Mer in 1915. Renoir père (affectingly played by Michel Bouquet) is 74, painfully hobbled by arthritis, and grieving the recent death of his wife. Christa Theret plays Andrée, the vibrant, pretty-in-petulance model who revives his creative, if not other, juices; a startling scene reveals he wishes otherwise. Yet the film's real star is the color orange-gold with a touch of russet, making an early appearance as the hair-and-clothing-matched Andrée bicycles in the sunlight to her modeling gig. *Renoir*'s setpiece shows the artist working on a canvas, with Mark Ping Bing Lee's camera gliding to models in soft focus, a kind of live action impressionism and a new take on the familiar *Bathers*. Wisely, director Gilles Bourdos keeps the pace slow, with all the tensions beneath the surface: Oedipal conflict, career choices, even class struggle. The ambitious Andrée, aka the future Catherine Hessling of Renoir's silent films, tells Jean she won't marry a "plate painter," but a film director might do. (R) Marsha McCreadie. *Edwards Westpark 8, Laguna Niguel*.

THE SAPPHIRES This fact-based, girl-group empowerment story never quite soars, but has its easy pleasures, and it's likely to become one of those movies everyone sees, maybe more than once. The wonderful Irish actor Chris O'Dowd, who played the laid-back highway patrolman in *Bridesmaids* (2011), stars as Dave Lovelace, a musician living out of his car who stumbles upon a gifted girl group in rural Australia circa 1968. The four young women are Aboriginals, and as such are shunned and abused by white neighbors they've known all their lives. When Julie (Jessica Mauboy), the one with the really great voice, sees an advertisement seeking acts to perform for American troops in Vietnam, she convinces the others (Deborah Mailman, Shari Sebbens, and Miranda Tapsell) to audition. After Dave encourages the girls to switch their repertoire from Merle Haggard to Otis Redding tunes, the girls soon find themselves performing in Saigon and the war zone beyond. First-time director Wayne Blair and screenwriters Keith Thompson and Tony Briggs, adapting Briggs' stage play, don't shy away from the era's social complexities, but they keep their eye on the ball, which in this case is

the sweet pull of soul tune harmony. Why resist? (PG-13) Chuck Wilson. *Countywide*.

6 SOULS In this silly but elegantly moody horror movie, Julianne Moore stars as Cara Harding, a psychologist who specializes in multiple personality disorder. When her shrink father (Jeffrey DeMunn) brings her in to examine soft-spoken David (Jonathan Rhys Meyer), the patient soon displays an aggressive alternate personality named Adam. Cara is thrown for a horror-film loop when she discovers that the real David was murdered 25 years ago, and thrown even further when those close to her begin to die, only to turn up as one of David/Adam's alternate personalities. Screenwriter Michael Cooney (*Identity*) has created a strong premise that eventually sinks into third-act predictability as Cara's investigation

leads her into chainsaw-massacre hill country, where a blind witch cures the possessed. Silly stuff, and not too scary, but Moore and Rhys Meyer make the journey worthwhile. Perpetually tense, and endlessly resourceful, they're well matched and a pleasure to watch, especially in the early therapy scenes. Swedish-born directors Måns Mårild and Björn Stein demonstrate a gift for inspiring good actors, including Frances Conroy as David's mother and Nate Corddry as Cara's computer-whiz brother, and for camera moves so creepily smooth that you can practically feel the duo's deep longing to direct a remake of *The Shining*. (R) Chuck Wilson. *Starlight Cinema City Theatres, Anaheim*.

SNITCH Though *Snitch* loudly announces itself as a social-issues movie, its nominal outrage over the severity of our

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nation's sentencing laws for first-time drug offenders is quickly subsumed by a jacked-up narrative of a father going to extremes to save his son. Inspired by a real-life incident detailed in a 1999 episode of *Frontline*, the film tracks construction-company magnate John Matthews (Dwayne Johnson) as he offers to go undercover to nab drug dealers in exchange for a reduced prison sentence for his estranged 18-year-old son, Jason (Rafi Gavron). The teenager, still apparently smarting over his parents' divorce, faces 10 years in jail for accepting a package filled with Ecstasy and refuses to concoct evidence against a friend to lessen his time behind bars. In order to assuage the hurt he's caused his first-born, John, after reading the Wikipedia entry for "drug cartel," first has closed-door meetings with a federal prosecutor (Susan Sarandon)—her villainy signaled by both her childlessness and a snide remark about gay weddings—then drives 1,000 miles in a semi containing mountains of coke secreted in cement bags. As the plot grows more and more absurd—Benjamin Bratt shows up as a drug kingpin named "El Topo"—*Snitch* reveals another kind of political agenda. After telling his co-conspirator in the blow setup that "there's no way I'm going to let either side dictate our fates," John stands in a gun shop, coolly assessing the arsenal that's his for the taking. (R) Melissa Anderson. Cinemark at the Pike, Long Beach; AMC Orange 30, Orange.

SPRING BREAKERS "All you need to make a movie is a girl and a gun" goes Jean-Luc Godard's quip. Add to that a few more girls and their bikinis and you have the rough formula for

Harmony Korine's *Spring Breakers*, which looks like the most expensive *Girls Gone Wild* video ever made and feels like a grindhouse version of a 1950s beach-party movie: *Where the Boys Are Pimps and Gangstas*. It's impossible to say where exploitation ends and deconstructionism begins. Four undergraduate friends—Brit, Faith, Candy and Cotty—are jonesing for a primal escape. In a casting coup, the girls are played by Disney and Teen People princesses—Vanessa Hudgens and Selena Gomez, along with *Pretty Little Liars* star Ashley Benson—who set their good-girl images ablaze. These Cinderellas dream of the Florida ball (or, given the lewd drawings we see two of them making in their history-class notebooks, balls), but a cash-flow problem threatens to leave them stranded on campus. So, they opt to hold up a local diner with squirt guns, ski masks and a Godardian resolve to transform life into cinema: "Just fuckin' pretend it's a video game. Act like you're in a movie or something." What follows is nothing if not bravura moviemaking—a robbery filmed in one continuous take from the p.o.v. of the getaway car as it circles the outside of the building. As a corn-rowed, elaborately tattooed hip-hop star with a sideline in drug and arms dealing, James Franco a consistent astonishment. Franco and Korine are so suited to collaboration, it's amazing it didn't happen sooner—two prankster artists whose straight-faced self-parody can skirt the sublime. (R) Scott Foundas. *Countywide*.

STARBUCK An ostensibly feel-good French-Canadian comedy about artificial insemination gone awry, Ken Scott's *Starbuck* mainly makes you feel

like taking a shower. The protagonist is a hapless 40-year-old Montreal bachelor named David (Patrick Huard, resembling a younger, hunkier Daniel Auteuil, without the wild-eyed intensity), whose life is turned upside down when he learns that his sperm-donating spree 20 years ago has resulted in 142 children (now an attractive gallery of college-age hipsters, all of whom, oddly, are just dying to meet him). Will he take the easy way out and remain anonymous? Or will he step up and embrace fatherhood? Take a wild guess. The humor here is broad and sitcom-ish, and Scott displays little sense of rhythm; the film runs under two hours, but feels considerably longer. And while there are nice touches along the way—notably a crosscut sequence in which David tries to get a glimpse of some of his kids without them noticing—the film's second half crescendos into full-on schmalz. I gave up hope when all 142 of David's offspring gather for a weekend getaway of sing-alongs, pick-up soccer, and lakeside frolicking; the whole thing looks like an extended United Colors of Benetton ad (or a cult excursion), and Scott indulges in such cringe-inducing flourishes as a montage of close-ups showing the half-brothers' and sisters' various tattoos. From there, *Starbuck* devolves into a series of heart-to-hearts (cue cloying music) and, despite its self-consciously contemporary subject matter, reveals a dismayingly retro message: Life has no meaning unless a biological father is front and center. (Not Rated) Jon Frosch. Regency Rancho Niguel 8, Laguna Niguel; Edwards Westpark 8, Irvine.



MOUND
ALLISON SCHULNIK



Laguna Babylon

Allison Schulnik's creepy videos and art stand in beautifully ugly contrast to the Laguna Art Museum's other show
BY DAVE BARTON

While my colleague wholeheartedly embraced the George Hurrell movie-star portraits in the modest upstairs gallery of Laguna Art Museum (see Stacy Davies' "Hooray for Hurrell!" March 15), it's Allison Schulnik's one-woman show, tucked away in the dark recesses of the museum's basement, that really deserves the huzzahs. Curated as part of Grace Kook-Anderson's bravura series of *ex pose* shows devoted to profiling up-and-coming and mid-career artists, the exhibition features the Los Angeles-based animator and abstract impressionist painter's canvases and sculptures, as well as her gently weird stop-motion films. A fitting rejoinder to Hurrell's sepia-toned Hollywood horse-shit, Schulnik also dabbles in the realm of film fantasy (the subject of 2012's *Scare-Bo* series is based on Ray Bolger's scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*), but she also embraces the world's imperfections with a wide-eyed, naive hope, firmly refusing Hurrell's whitewashed escapism.

For instance, the lilting "Ready, Able" by Grizzly Bear, playing softly in the dark womb of the anterior screening room, seems the perfect soundtrack as the elevator doors open onto the gallery downstairs. The music video, called *Forest* and directed by Schulnik, has nothing to do with the song—not that many indie music videos ever really do—but take a seat and watch it in its entirety. Unless you've ingested LSD at some point during your life, you're unlikely to have any clue about what you've just seen. A humanoid cross between Gandalf and a wall-eyed, albino Bigfoot stares at its twin on the other side of a river forest. One liquescens and flows into the water, polluting it, while the other smiles. Naked claymationimps squirm in the blobby, white hand

"WTF doesn't even begin to describe it."

of the remaining figure, until they're fed to a lizard/dragon that melts and shape-shifts during some sort of psychedelic experience. After Gandalf is sucked up into a plastic cube/space ship, the remaining minutes of the video are cuts to more creatures, a host of disembodied heads straight out of *The Haunted Mansion*, and more imps.

WTF doesn't even begin to describe it. There's more of the same in the artist's other two films: 2011's childlike, but completely disconcerting, *Mound*, where dozens of ethereal clay figures blossom and die and bleed into each other in an indistinguishable mass of eyes, erections and gaping mouths intercut with skeletal, string-haired dancers performing Pina Bausch choreography. 2008's *Hobo Clown*, also featuring hypnotic music by Grizzly Bear, is less inscrutable and seems more straightforwardly linear: a sympathetic portrayal of mental illness, as a homeless clown in a dark alleyway morphs into a luminous white-faced clown, surrounded by colorful (albeit, eventually predatory) flowers.

Psychosis, melting faces and nature as oppressive force also inform Schulnik's paintings and sculptures in the next room. So new you can smell the oil paint, the pictures feature subjects surrounded by hostile landscapes, thick globs of paint on the canvases giving the work a prickly, grasping, gooey *living* quality. In the *Cemetery Boo* series, a Walt Whitman figure (modeled by Schulnik's partner) doodles

in the dirt with a stick in a graveyard, surrounded by gray tombstones and emaciated trees stripped of leaves, or sits glaring at us as nature creeps in at both sides to surround him and his feline companion (in *Cemetery Boo #2*). In a recorded interview accompanying the show, Schulnik says she considers the title subject in her painting *Boneless Horse* a hero in the vein of Eeyore or *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Isolated by a dense black background, the desiccated flesh, yellow teeth, lolling tongue and black pits for eyes elicit sympathy for the poor beast, but it isn't "heroic" that comes to mind. "Glue factory" seems more appropriate. Likewise, the patchwork face of the Bolger character in *Big Scare-Bo Head* isn't comforting or warm: the bone structure of the face is constantly shifting, corruptible, the skin full of boils and pustules ready to burst open and spray the viewer.

Even Schulnik's still lifes celebrate the tainted: Flowers are often used as sexual metaphors, but in the vibrant red, spread-eagled female nude on the vase holding *October Flowers* sexual isn't immune to decay: the buds and florets are tinged with black. In *Gourds and Flowers*, blossoms wilt and droop, the pumpkins looking like your fingers would easily punch through their thin, rotting veneers if you even thought about picking them up.

While much of the work on display is a tad repetitive, and the show would've benefited from the inclusion of some of the artist's earlier, scarier work, what we do see is clearly not going to be to everyone's taste, and I say bravi to Kook-Anderson and Laguna Art Museum for giving such decidedly original, visionary work a shot. I'll happily take Schulnik's shout-out to the depressing inevitability of time and nature catching up with us, and her embrace of the underdog over the airbrushed tomfoolery of Hurrell's Hollywood.

"EX POSE: ALLISON SCHULNIK"
at the Laguna Art Museum, 307 Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach, (949) 494-8971; www.lagunaartmuseum.org. Through April 28. Open Mon.-Tues. & Fri.-Sun., 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Thurs., 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. \$5-\$7. Children under 12 free.

TRENDZILLA
» MICHELLE WOO

Oh, Hello Awesome!

Danni Hong runs one of those blogs that makes you want to grab a blanket and toothbrush and live inside. I've adored Oh, Hello Friend (www.ohhellofriendblog.com) for years; her daily posts on design inspiration, vintage style and all things preeeeetty have prompted thousands of gals to gasp, swoon and immediately sign onto Pinterest.

So naturally, when she opened a retail store in downtown Fullerton a couple months ago, lines swarmed out the door.

"My mom came to help with the opening and was like, 'What are all these people doing here?'" she says. "I told her they were here for the shop. She was like, 'Really?'"

Really. Every inch of the cozy, Anthropologie-esque space is filled with gifts and goods to make your day brighter—vintage wood-block stamps, illustrated tea towels, DIY terrarium kits, rolls of heart-print washi tape, tiny cake stands and snarky love-notes that read, "You had me at health insurance."

Of the collection, the 27-year-old explains, "I wanted to create a place where you can find something unique."

Hong, who studied graphic design at the Art Institute of California-Orange County, launched the Oh, Hello Friend blog in 2008 to accompany her Etsy shop of jewelry and stationery items. (In high school, she and her BFF would address each other, "Hello, friend," hence the name.) She'd write about her interests—thrifting, traveling, note-writing and her now-husband and business partner, Nick Keith. To build the brand, she started selling at craft fairs all over the map, from Patchwork in Santa Ana and Long Beach to events in Austin, Chicago and London. "At shows, people would always ask, 'Do you have a retail shop?' That was always a dream. Finally, we said, 'Let's just go for it.'"

The couple transformed the spot with vintage-style touches, hanging strings of bulb lights and creating an Oh, Hello Friend marquee-light sign out of cardboard. It's been a labor of love (and too many paper cuts), but Hong says she doesn't see it as work. Recently, a blog reader emailed her about a tote bag that simply says, "Be Brave." The woman said she had cancer and wanted to bring the bag to her doctor appointments.

"I was just like, 'Give me your address. I'm sending it to you now,'" Hong says. "That was really cool, just being able to encourage someone with a tiny little thing. People like her are the inspiration."

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Heckler Schmeckler

How comics react to that one, not-so-special loudmouth in the crowd

BY ALI LERMAN

When it comes to the world of standup comedians, at one point or another, every comic has shut down a heckler from the stage. Now we are calling them out. Aside from being completely annoying, your garden-variety loudmouth at a comedy show is disruptive to the comic—who is in the zone doing his or her job—and ruins it for the rest of the crowd, who paid to see a show. Not cool. Consensus says that most heck-

ling happens when someone is drunk. Even if you aren't saucy but you are thinking about "getting your heckle on," you should pretty much think about shutting the fuck up. We asked the pros what they think of hecklers and how they deal with this breed of a-hole "fan boys/gals" that shout out for attention just so they can brag about it later. After hearing their side, you'll think first about adding in your own "two cents."



YOU'RE NOT HALF BAD!

BRAD WOLLACK: Fortunately, I've never experienced people seeking out to get burned but that's annoying because it then becomes a whole thing about that individual fan. That's the worst part about heckling. It's not even what you are doing to the comedian because 99 percent of comedians can handle it just fine. And 99 percent of the time the comedian will win. But really, you are distracting the rest of the audience from the experience and it's not about you. They're paying money to see the comedian onstage and they don't want to hear Joe Fuckface decide to try out his best material from the crowd when he gets drunk.

WAYNE BRADY: Those people probably just like that person so much that negative attention is still attention. So if this person feels that if they jump up and say something nice, they won't have access to this person. But if they yell out, "You're a dick!" or they try to beat the guy to the punch line to his joke, then they'll have that guy's attention. Then the comic ends up turning his comedic energy onto the person and that just made their day. Then they'll go online and go, "Oh my god! Joe Rogan just talked about me and my mom and called me flaming ass weed! Oh my god my day was made!" How weird is that? I don't get it, but it doesn't surprise me. I will never understand people.

GILBERT GOTTFRIED: What's weird with hecklers is that sometimes they go against the wrong comic and then the comic rips them apart. But the bad thing is, a lot of these hecklers are drunk and stupid and if the comic calls them an asshole, they hear a laugh and they think, "Hey, I'm pretty funny!" And that encourages them to heckle for the rest of the show. They don't know that they were the butt of the laugh. It just happened at my last show and after one joke this guy yelled out, "Boo!" And immediately another guy yelled out to him, "Shut the fuck up!" And that took care of that for the whole show! I thought, wow, that's more precise and to the point than anything I could've come up with. Sometimes it's the old classics that work!

MARGARET CHO: Hecklers are pretty common because there is always someone like that. It depends sometimes if you are doing later shows too because the drunker people get, the more likely it is to happen. I got more of it when I was younger, but there are definitely a percentage of people that feel like they're adding to a show by heckling. For some reason, people are fairly intimidated by me so I don't get as many hecklers as other people might. I don't know why people are scared of me but there's always been this weird thing where it's like, "Oh don't fuck with her! She's crazy or something!" So I have that going for me I guess!



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BANGIN' ON WAX—AND
SMOKIN' IT!

VICE RECORDS



Ravenous Rapper

Action Bronson is about to take a huge bite outta the hip-hop game. And he's got the munchies.

BY ADAM LOVINUS

It's lunch time, and Action Bronson is walking around Brooklyn, stopping at a taco truck and ordering, in Spanish, a torta de bistec, mushroom quesadilla and tamales. He's come in from his home in Flushing, Queens, to meet with his label, Vice Records, where footage of the big man's first-ever try at crowd-surfing on a recent tour stop in Canada was being edited.

"I was in Toronto performing; they just show so much fucking love [there]," Bronson says, in a quick-paced, Queens accent. "I just figured I'd show a little love back and fuckin' throw my 310 pounds into the crowd, right up on peoples' heads. I'll tell you this—I was surfin'. I wish I would be able to do that again, but I don't know who's gonna show that much love."

It takes a lot of love to hoist a man of Bronson's stature; his weight, which Vice label-mate Snoop Lion deadpans in one YouTube interview, "is a lot to deal with."

Bronson was born big, the son of an Albanian restaurateur and a Jewish mother, growing up in the same Flushing neighborhood where the 28-year-old still resides, where, naturally, good food was imperative from a young age: "I was always in the kitchen, so I grew up around it," he says. "And I love eating."

Bronson's boyhood consisted of pro-wrestling fandom, cooking in his father's Mediterranean restaurant and getting his hands on as much classic '90s hip-hop as he could.

"As soon as I was able to think on my own, I was into it," he says about his early infatuation with rap. "I used to buy everything to get acquainted with it. N.W.A.,

Mobb Deep—all the classic stuff, all the classic R&B from when I was growing up."

He was also a serious athlete in his pre-rap days. "I played Little League for like 10 years in a row, played in high school, played football. Then it became bitches and weed. And money. And cars. And rugs. And drapes. And Fabergé eggs."

Just two years into the rap game, Bronson has branded himself as the gourmet chef who happens to rap. Sure, it's

"As soon as I was able to think on my own, I was into it."

schtick, but it's as legitimate and truthful as schtick can get. A graduate of the Art Institute of New York's Culinary Arts Program, Bronson has held down serious chef gigs in NYC steakhouses, including a stint at Citi Field, where he cooked post-game meals for the Mets.

Bronson started taking rapping seriously after a freak kitchen accident—he slipped on an oily floor and buckled his leg. "I can still hear the sound of the bone snapping," he says. On his 2011 debut LP *Mr. Lector*, Bronson concocted rhymes that reference cheese plates and lake-caught pike in the same stanza as lesbian cunnilingus and smoking blunts, while using a nasal, crass delivery reminiscent of Ghostface Killah, a boyhood hero he's recently collaborated with on the song "Meteor Hammer." He hasn't cooked professionally since his debut, supporting

himself and his family (he became a father at 21, and now has two young children) as a rapper.

The food/weed/pussy formula is working well for Bronson, who's amassed a cult following of hip-hop heads with a penchant for gourmet eats, and vivid, sometimes absurdist rhymes about bud and sexual exploits. His follow-up EPs—2011's *Well-Done* and 2012's *Rare Chandeli-ers*—feature production work by Statik Selektah and The Alchemist, respectively. The music caught the attention of Vice Records, a Warner Bros. affiliate, who signed Bronson last summer.

He's keeping details about his major label debut close to his chest: "It is called *Saab Stories*, [produced by] Harry Fraud; I only have one feature [artist] on there, and it's not someone I've worked with before," he says. "I can't say when, but it'll be out soon."

Bronson is also looking to set down roots here on the West Coast on a more permanent basis. He's recorded his last several releases in LA, but insists that Queens will still be his permanent home. "I'm gonna get a spot in the Santa Monica or Venice area hopefully pretty soon. It's a nice contrast from living on the East Coast, just a spot where I can have my family in where they can be comfortable."

When asked if he's looking forward to getting his medical marijuana card, Bronson is a little blasé; obviously scoring herb has never been a problem, not to mention he doesn't even smoke it anymore—he's gone exclusively to medicating with a G Pen personal vaporizer.

"I've just been smokin' straight wax. The difference is getting 20 percent THC, versus 100 percent. You just get trashed."

ACTION BRONSON

performs at the Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600. Wed., April 17 9 p.m. \$18. For more on Bronson, visit www.actionbronson.com.

EXENE SAYS
» EXENE CERVENKA

Scorched Earth Policy

Beginning in 1972, with genetic manipulations of bacteria, a new breed of specially trained assholes have been fucking up the natural world, playing god, with no possible knowledge of the far-flung consequences that their actions will have on this planet. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are everywhere, yes, everywhere. Bacteria, yeast, insects, plants, fish and mammals have all been messed with to create new species, chimeras.

In 2007, before President Obama's first term, he said he would label GMOs because we should know what we are eating. But last week, Congress passed the "Consolidated & Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013," or HR 933. Attached to that is Section 735, affectionately known as the "Monsanto Protection Act," because it protects the Monsanto Corporation from litigation. The rider came courtesy of Missouri Senator Roy Blunt, who told Politico's David Rogers that he "worked with" Monsanto to craft the rider. President Obama signed HR 933.

Is there any proof GMOs are harmful? I mean, bona-fide scientific proof? Maybe, maybe not. But if there are ill effects on human health SOMEDAY, Monsanto will be safe from worrying about that.

Agent Orange (chemical warfare brought to you by Monsanto and Dow) was used by the United States during the Vietnam War to destroy crops, jungle and remove people from rural areas. In addition to the death and devastation of innocent people in that region, Vietnam veterans have had a long, hard struggle to get the government to recognize the catastrophic health effects that they have endured from the use of Agent Orange.

The GREAT news is: HR 933 will expire in 6 months, on September 30, 2013. Maybe if we really, really beg our Congresscreatures, they will help it stay expired and not renew it. Because if Monsanto doesn't get held accountable for their actions, the precedent is set that no corporation should.

In 1985, the first Farm Aid concert was held in Champaign, Illinois. X got asked to play, and it was an honor. On July 4th, 1986, X played the second Farm Aid concert in Austin, Texas. I've always hoped that small family farms could be saved from the Agri-biz that was taking over America's land. Seems like it's all just one big farm now. And we're the animals.

[Editor's Note: Exene Cervenka is a writer, visual artist and punk rock pioneer. To contact her, send all messages to askexene@ocweekly.com.]

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YES, WE HAVE PAPERS!



Stamping Their Passport

A new record and a slot at Coachella could help the Colourist go farther than they thought

BY DANIEL KOHN

Communication between band members is one of the most important yet often-overlooked aspects of being in a band. Just ask the Colourist's Adam Castilla and Maya Tuttle. Their previous outfit, Paper Thin Walls, won a contest to play at a Led Zeppelin after-party in London in 2007. It sounded great in theory, but when Tuttle

forgot to inform the band she entered them in the contest, it caused some minor problems closer to the date.

"We found out about the Led Zeppelin show a week before it happened," singer/guitarist Castilla recalls. "I didn't have a passport, so I had to get one in literally 24 hours and it cost \$500. If nothing else, when we formed

this band, we made sure everyone had a passport ready to go."

After Paper Thin Walls broke up, Castilla and Tuttle soldiered on, eventually adding Castilla's friends Justin Wagner and Kollin Johannsen to become the Colourist. Within minutes of meeting them, their goofball chemistry is palpable. Sitting across from the quartet, we're surrounded by high-end recording equipment, multiple guitars and scratched-off lottery tickets, the band's guilty pleasure. They're smiling and giddy, hardly able to contain their excitement.

"We've all been friends, and it's not like one of those things where you're set up with random musicians to start some music group," Castilla says. "We always have a good time together, in and out of the studio."

After five long months of recording in Eagle Rock, the Costa Mesa-based outfit is putting the finishing touches on their debut album. The 14 new songs (11 of them are making the album) are a departure from what most ardent OC supporters have heard. Recently, the band gave a glimpse of what's to come when they posted "Little Games" to their website.

Like plenty of successful bands, the Colourist have a knack for creating tunes that reflect on frustration inside an upbeat indie-pop framework. "All of our songs are like that; they have darker meanings, but they're about pushing through and having happy endings," Castilla says.

After years playing shows in Orange County, the band caught the attention of reps from a handful of major labels during a residency at Los Angeles' Bootleg Theater, where their live shows hit a peak.

"Once we played those shows, we started getting a cool reaction," Castilla says. "It got bigger and bigger every week."

While there were a few solid offers on the table, the band inked a deal with Universal Republic Records in July 2012. The label has allowed them the creative freedom necessary to make an album that will please everyone.

The Colourist have their eyes set on a late summer release, but until then, they've got their bags packed ready to showcase their new material at Coachella—an event they say they can cross off their bucket list—along with tour dates supporting fellow up-and-comers like Metric, the Wombats and Youngblood Hawke.

"There's been so much blood and sweat put into this album, in the end, we're just really excited to see how people react to it," Castilla explains.

No matter how far the new record takes them, the Colourist won't need to fork over \$500 for their passports this time around.



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Sometimes the process of creating a labor of love from the ground up can be less-than-pretty. After months of planting ideas for their sophomore La Habra EP, Gardeners Logic are in a hurry to find out if all the elements are in place to help their soon-to-be-finished recording make an impact when it sees the light of day at the end of April.

The challenge, though, is being able to finish it in the midst of their second residency at Detroit Bar, where the Huntington Beach band is filling up Mondays in April with various shades of indie rock and Americana lineups to support their acoustic-driven, road trip-ready songs. As their April 29th record release approaches—the last night of their four-week stint—the promise of late-night mixing sessions, crammed schedules and copious amounts of sweat aren't enough to intimidate this young-but-scrappy crew of OC folksters.

"We have this deadline now so it's gotta get done one way or the other," says drummer Matt Wilson. He's sporting a plaid shirt and horn-rimmed glasses as he sits clutching a frosty beer bottle in Detroit's back lounge. Seated with feet dangling on one of the pool tables is thick-bearded front vocalist/guitarist Ian Bailey, whose songwriting takes cues from Wilco, Bonnie Prince Billy and Sufjan Stevens. While their previous EP favored melodic, story-driven songs about travel and passing adolescence, the new effort is more introverted and stripped down. Bailey, Wilson and guitarist Vince Phung (full disclosure: Phung also books local bands at Detroit Bar) are the main lineup, which once included seven people.

"I was really anal about [re-creating] the sound of the record and we definitely got

that. But as time went on, people had things come up ... school and all that," Bailey says. So we condensed down into a four piece ... We got to tighten up and Vince [Phung] picked up a lot of slack on guitar." That fourth slot is usually rotated in by various OC musicians in their circle.

The band started in 2008 as Bailey's sapling of a solo side project designed for music that didn't sit right in other bands he was in. Later that year he joined the Counter Regiment, and met and started playing with Wilson and good friend Gary Westmoreland. Though they fizzled in 2011, the three friends sprouted up a more impressive venture—opening Music Arts Production Studio (MAPS) in Huntington Beach. Wilson is the primary engineer, recording a variety of local bands, as well as his own, for the last three years. Once Bailey came in to lay down some of his Gardeners Logic material that December, he and Wilson saw enough growth potential to embark on the debut EP.

Seven months later, after keeping the project largely under wraps, the band released the EP. It's anchored by howling indie pop gems like "Coyote Run" and the safe-sounding, alt-country jam "Costa Mesa," and snagged them their first residency at Detroit. At the time, the venue served as an incubator for them to not only hone their sound, but grow their own community of bands and collaborators, which now includes acts like Fellow Bohemian and Big Monsta (Wilson also plays drums in that band).

So far, the second go-round at Detroit is a good place to spread out sonically and tease their new material while they finish recording it. Each night of the residency offers one track from the new EP, with the last night reserved for a set comprised of the first and second EPs back-to-back. One thing that sort of throws off this easily predictable way of doing things is their choice to produce a music video for "Coyote Run" off of the first EP, instead of a track from their newer material. When asked about the logic behind that move, Bailey says people should realize that fruits of a band's labor have to come in an organic way.

"It's definitely ass-backwards a little bit," he says. "We are also putting a single out for the first one after the second one comes out. But really, it's all just creative output."

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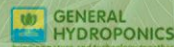
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3 BEST PRANKS AND NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES FROM FESTIVAL SEASON

AS TOLD BY IMAGINE DRAGONS, LOCAL NATIVES, AND BAT FOR LASHES BY HEIDI DARBY

Festivals warrant endless tales of shenanigans, close calls, extreme bladder control and, of course, unforgettable live music. Overflowing lineups and constant interaction with strangers virtually guarantee festival fans a handful of outrageous stories—not to mention a bit of wisdom for the next go-around. But what happens on the opposite side of the barricades? What mischief lies beyond those VIP fences? Fans are only part of the equation, and the time has come for the other half to start talking. Members of Dropkick Murphys, Imagine Dragons, Bat for Lashes and Local Natives pull back the festival curtain and reveal the highs and lows of festival season.



3 BEST FULL-CIRCLE MOMENT

"I went to Coachella as a fan back in 2007 or 2008, and it was my first festival, and an eye-opening experience. It was amazing to play a festival [in 2010], especially playing Coachella. About thirty minutes before the show we were sound checking and it was already super packed. We weren't expecting that kind of a turnout that early in the day. All of us are from Southern California so being able to be up there and play in a tent with people singing all your songs was a surreal experience. It was really overwhelming."

—Matt Frazier, Local Natives

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2 BEST FESTIVAL PRANK

"[At European metal festivals] we'll take empty T-shirt boxes that are all nice and new and we'll put 'em out in the middle of a field. Gangs of metal heads come by and realize there's something in the middle of this field that hasn't been completely destroyed or urinated on yet, and they'll just pounce on it and tear it to shreds. It's never-ending fun watching that happen. A couple times we actually hid a roadie in the box to scare 'em before they started to tear it apart. They barely make it out alive, but it's good fun." —Ken Casey, Dropkick Murphys, who offers the following festival advice: "Back in the day, I met Jimmy Pursey of Sham 69 and you'd a thought he was Billy Joel the way he treated me. Sometimes you don't want to meet your idol because they'll let you down."



1 BEST NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE

One time we had to evacuate the stage at this Polish festival because it had been struck by lightning. All of these lightning strikes were coming down. We weren't allowed to be anywhere near metal, we all had to go back into our tour buses and wait there. Then we had about 15 minutes to pack all our gear away, soaking wet. It was crazy. You're usually on an outdoor stage, so you're dealing with natural phenomena as well as huge crowds of people. It's a crazy environment."

—Natasha Khan, Bat for Lashes

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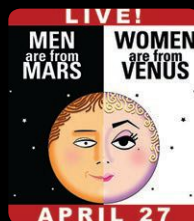
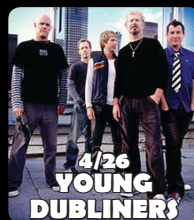
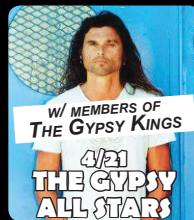
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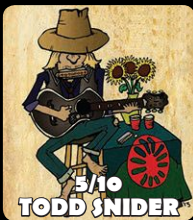
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DIVE, DIVE MY DARLING

» TAYLOR HAMBY

The Oklahoma City Thing

Our new dive bar column begins with a ride to Mother's Tavern in Sunset Beach that blinds everyone

BY TAYLOR HAMBY

"S"tay centered, don't lean too much and hold on," instructs my friend Jessica as we get ready to head out for the evening—solid advice for a night of dive-by drinking. She straddles her 1978 Kawasaki KZ 200 and kicks the ignition a few times as I fiddle with my helmet. I've never been on a bike before. Jess rolls it out from the garage and once she brakes, I hop on back and bear-hug her tightly. Even as we ride down her quiet residential street, the adrenaline starts pumping. Like a kid being shielded from the scary bits of a movie, I peek over Jessica's shoulder, intermittently, between eye clenches.

We get going on PCH, my equilibrium settles after a few minutes and we go over a bridge. That's when I peak, and the realization hits that despite being incredibly vulnerable and bombarded by a flurry of naked wind, it's a Zen moment. There's a calmness within; you, the bike, and the darkened sea breeze are on the way to a bona-fide biker bar. Just as I'm really getting into it, we reach Mother's Tavern. Damn!—we're the only people who've actually arrived on a bike. What a bunch of pansies! Jessica pulls up front, right under the American flag, as she should.

We pop in and a cover band with a stand-up bass is playing loudly. We roll up to the bar and grab a seat. After being served tapped beers in Mason jars (no liquor here) by a young brunette, I turn to take in the scenery. Bright red walls are stapled with hundreds of defaced dollar bills. Peanut shells cover the ground, and bras and panties hang proudly from the ceiling. Maximum occupancy of 49.

A man with an untucked long-sleeved cream-collared shirt is sitting next to Jessica. He leans over and asks if I need my glasses to see or if it's "like an Oklahoma City thing." The reference is lost on me, but I figure it's a basketball thing. (A Google search later confirms my guess, Oklahoma City Thunder point guard Russell Westbrook is known for wearing fake spectacles.

"Oh no," I shoot back. "I'm as blind as a bat. Do you wanna try them on?"

He happily obliges and then gasps: "Holy shit!"



LEFT MY BRA AND DIGNITY AT THE BAR

BEST LINE OF THE NIGHT: "I love fucking girls with high heels. When they put them over my shoulders, they're like antlers." —Guy

FAVORITE PIECE OF FLAIR: The blue and pink pair of leopard panties stapled to the rafters with a Jesus fish hanging from the crotch.

"I know," I crack. "If I didn't have these things I'd probably end up going home with some pretty ugly guys."

He takes my glasses to a lady across the bar (read: four or five steps away). "Hey, try these on," he tells her. After a few more nudges she puts them on. "Oh my god!" she says. "Where's your dog?"

He comes back over, returns my Coke bottles and serves as our entertainment for the rest of the night, spouting endless wisdom ("Hey, if you ever run out of money here, just grab a dollar from the wall!") and repeating slurred lyrics from "Lay Lady Lay" by Bob Dylan and "The Wrong Way" by Sublime—he was especially fond of the "But I'm staring at her tits," part.

The guy (whose name is Guy, incidentally) was kind enough to buy Jess and me a beer then piss off the bartender by attempting to throw free peanuts into the red candles atop the bar. Didn't end up making a shot, but he did hit the rim and get rather excited when I made a snide remark about a rim job. Halfway through his beer, Guy disappeared.

M'lady had to stay sober so we didn't stay long, and I just stuck to the Shock Tops. We hopped back on the bike, and I rode bitch with a lit grit clenched in my teeth, secretly hoping she'd take the long way home.

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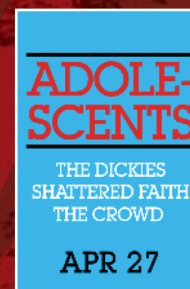
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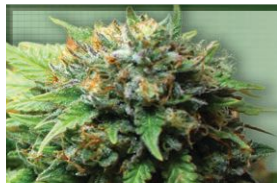
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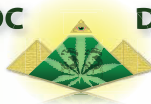


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BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): German theologian Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a central figure in the rebellion against the Catholic Church that led to the Protestant Reformation. You'll never guess where he was when he was struck by the epiphany that became the core axiom of his new religion. I'll tell you: He was sitting on the toilet in the Wittenberg Monastery. The Holy Spirit gave him the crucial knowledge then and there, or so he testified. In this spirit, Aries, keep a very open mind about where you will be and what you will be doing when your illuminations arrive this week.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your task is to uncover the semi-happy ending that was hidden back in the story's beginning. Once you do that, you may be able to create a graceful and honorable climax. In fact, I don't think you will be able to bring about the semi-happy ending any other way. It's crucial that you return to the original flash of inspiration -- the time when all the plot lines that eventually developed were first germinating. You need to remember fate's primal promise. You've got to read the signs you missed in the early going.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): If you play poker, the odds are one in 649,740 that you will get a royal flush. That's an ace, king, queen, jack and ten of one suit. As for drawing a straight flush -- any five consecutive cards of one suit -- the odds are one in 72,192. Judging from the current astrological omens, Gemini, I'd say your chance of getting one of those hands is far better than usual -- maybe one in 88,000 for the royal flush and one in 8,888 for the straight flush. But those still aren't great odds. On the other hand, getting a flush -- all five cards of the same suit -- is normally one in 509, but these days it's pretty likely for you. The moral of the story, not just for when you're playing cards, but in whatever you do: Expect really good luck, but not miraculous, out-of-this-world luck.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): "Wherever you stand, be the soul of that place," wrote the poet Rumi. This is excellent advice for you right now, Cancerian. You are nearing the peak of your power to express yourself with beautiful accuracy. You have more skill than usual at understanding and conveying the interesting truth. As a result, you're in a position to wield extra influence. People are receptive to being moved by your heart-felt intelligence. So please do more than simply push for greater efficiency, order, and discipline. Those things are good, but I hope you will also be a radiant role model who exemplifies what it means to be soulful.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Golden Rock is a Buddhist holy site in Burma. It's a small pagoda built on top of a giant boulder that in turn seems to be precariously balanced at the edge of a down-sloping bed of rock. How does the boulder remain stationary? Why doesn't it roll off the edge? It appears to defy gravity. Legend says that it's held in place by a single strand of hair from the Buddha's head. I suspect that many of you Leos will soon have access to a tricky asset with resemblances to that magic strand. True, it might be merely metaphorical. But if used correctly, it could become a key element in a future foundation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It's Soul-Search-ing Season: a good time to go in search of your soul. To aid your quest, I'll offer a few lines from "A Few Words on the Soul," a poem by Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska. "We have a soul at times," she says. "No one's got it non-stop, for keeps. Day after day, year after year may pass without it. For every thousand conversations, it participates in one, if even that, since it prefers silence. It's picky: our hustling for a dubious advantage and creaky machinations make it sick. Joy and sorrow aren't two different feelings for it. It attends us only when the two are joined. We can count on it when we're sure of nothing and curious

about everything. It won't say where it comes from or when it's taking off again, though it's clearly expecting such questions. We need it but apparently it needs us for some reason too." (Translation by Stanislaw Baranczak and Clare Cavanagh. Read the whole poem here: <http://tinyurl.com/SearchSoul>.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "I do not believe in God," said Mexican painter Diego Rivera, "but I believe in Picasso." My poet-musician friend Tanya has a similar philosophy. "I don't believe in God, or even Goddess, for that matter," she says. "But I do believe in Patti Smith." Do you have a God-substitute, Libra? Or, if you do have faith in a Cosmic Wow, is there also a more approachable, second-tier source of divinity you love? According to my reading of the astrological omens, you would really benefit from feeling an intimate kind of reverence right now -- a tender devotion for something higher and brighter that awakens the sleeping part of your lust for life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): This would be an excellent time to stage staring contests with yourself in the mirror. There's a high likelihood that you will win every time. I think you'll also have great success whenever you try to read your own mind. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, you've got an uncanny knack for plucking buried secrets and self-deceptions out of their hiding places. One more thing, Scorpio: Have you ever considered how fun it might be to wash your own brain and kick your own butt? Now would be an excellent time to experiment with those radical acts of healing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): "It's so hard to forget pain, but it's even harder to remember sweetness," writes novelist Chuck Palahniuk. "We have no scar to show for happiness. We learn so little from peace." Your assignment in the coming days, Sagittarius, is to prove Palahniuk wrong. As the surges of sweetness flow through you, as your secret joy ripens into bright blooming bliss, imprint the sensations on your memory. Vow to remember them for the rest of your life. Make these breakthrough moments into talismans that will serve as magical spells whenever you need rejuvenation in the future.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein had his priorities straight. This is what he said about his profession: "In philosophy the race is won by the one who can run slowest -- the one who crosses the finish line last." It's my belief, Capricorn, that a similar rule should apply to you in the coming days -- no matter what project you're working on or goal you're trying to accomplish. Proceed slowly enough to be absolutely thorough, meticulous, and conscientious. As you make your way to the finish line, be as deep as you dare.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): In Samuel Beckett's novel *Molloy*, the main character talks about a long overland journey he took on foot and by bicycle. Before the trip, he had read somewhere that when people are lost in a forest, they often imagine they're moving in a straight line when in fact they're going in a circle. That's why, during his own travels, he intentionally walked in a circle, hoping thereby to go straight. Although this might sound like a loopy strategy, Aquarius, I think it will make sense for you to adopt in the coming week. Your apparent path may be very different, maybe even opposite, to your actual path.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Are you in competition with someone who is doing mediocre work? Do you find it incomprehensible that anyone would pay attention to that weak expression instead of flocking to your beautiful vibe? If so, here's my advice. Withdraw your attention from your inferior opponent. Don't waste a minute feeling jealous or resentful or incredulous. Instead, concentrate your energy on making your production so strong and smart and irresistible that you simply overshadow and overwhelm your rival's.

Homework: I'm guessing that many of you will soon be discovering secrets about where you came from. Report results to Freewillastrology.com.

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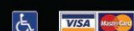
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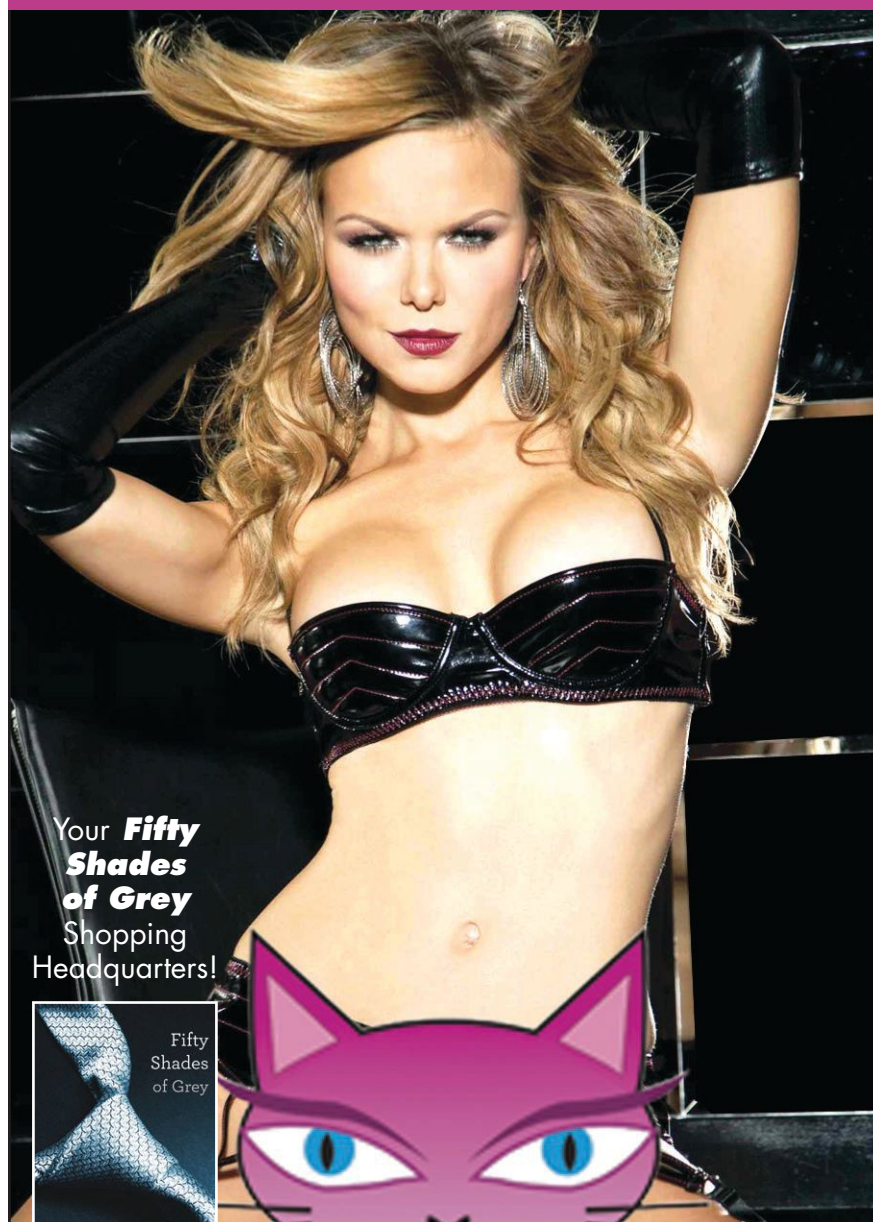
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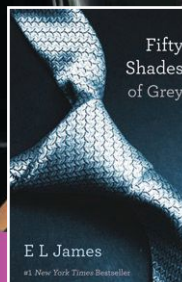
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Position Summary:

Conducts sales activities for Cybernet to provide inside sales within our vertical markets of Healthcare/Medical, Financial, Education, Industrial or IT Service, soliciting orders for Cybernet products and services.

Essential Functions:

- Places and receives calls from current and prospective customers; explains types of products and services offered in an effort to promote ongoing and new sales and business
- Primary emphasis will be inside sales within one of several assigned markets, based on a direct mail, e-blasts and other lead generation programs that Cybernet implements
- Quotes verbal and written prices to prospects and customers.
- Generates necessary correspondence to and from existing and prospective customers that are required for ongoing business and sales purposes
- Follows up on sales leads with prospective customers and solicits Cybernet products and services

Requirements

- Education, Experience and Skills Required:
- Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, related field, or equivalent work experience
- One year sales experience in a related industry
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- Strong verbal, written, analytical, persuasive, and interpersonal skills

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Summons

**SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL) Case Number: 12K07564 - NO-
TICE TO DEFENDANT: ALEJANDRO MORALES GONZALEZ, YOU
ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: ARMEN ASATRYAN - NOTICE!**

You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. The name and address of the court is: LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT - STANLEY MOSK, 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

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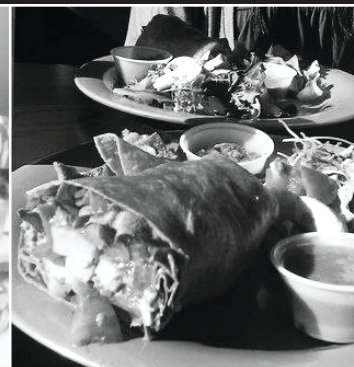
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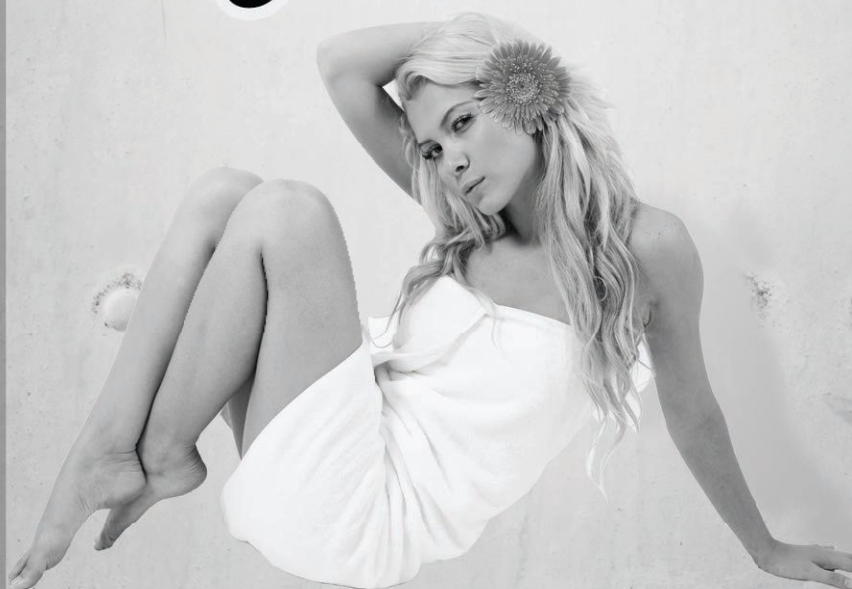
4/13- NEW CASTLE
4/20- GOOSE ISLAND 312
NOON-?

*LUCKY CUSTOMER GETS AN EMPTY
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Sunday, May 5th, 2013

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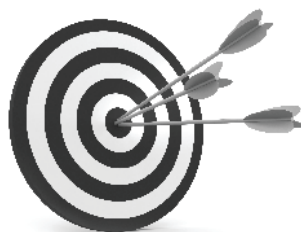
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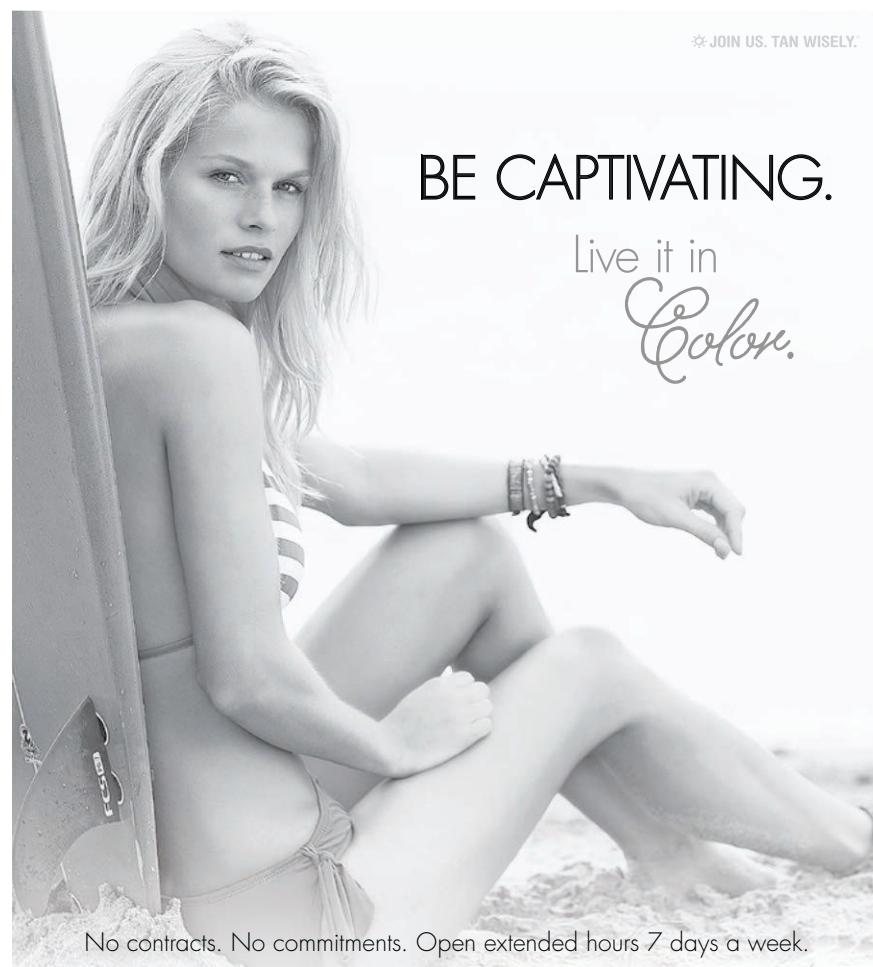
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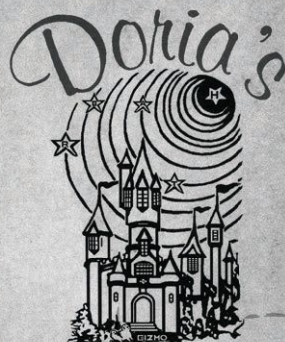
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4/13 RHYTHM METHOD 9-1PM

4/14 RAY JORDAN 5-8PM

4/16 TACO TUESDAY & DJ JONNY 8:30-12AM

4/17 AVION TASTING WITH BILLABONG

4/18 KING TIME 8:30-12:30AM

4/19 BLACKLIGHT FUSION 9-1AM

4/20 3 MUSTACHES 9-1AM

4/23 TACO TUESDAY & DJ JONNY 8:30-12AM

4/24 JT DOUGLAS 8-11PM

4/26 COUNTRY ROOTS 9-1AM

4/27 CLIFF MILKER BAND 9-1AM

4/28 WILLY POND 7-10PM

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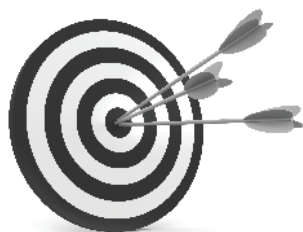
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